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VIEWS OF THE HOLY TRINITY.



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VIEWS OF THE HOLY TRINITY:

DOCTRINAL

AND

EXPERIMENTAL.

By Prof. A. Miller



CHARLESTON:

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PREFACE.

THE pages of this little volume were written many years since, at the repeated request of a valued and loved Christian friend, who desired to have them for her own *private use*. Soon after, the writer of these Views of the Holy Trinity was requested to allow others to peruse the manuscript, and this request was also granted; but the result was, that the manuscript was circulated among Christians of various denominations, far more extensively than the writer of it ever intended that it should be. And shortly after, letters were received from ministers and private Christians, attached to the Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist Churches, requesting that these Views of the Trinity should be printed, for the benefit of Christians generally. Many stated that they had personally received great profit and enlargement of soul in reading the manuscript, and urged the publication of it, as a Christian duty.

Repeatedly, within the last ten years, this has been urged from different quarters and denominations of Christians. But this was invariably refused, from motives of delicacy, which

could not be overcome till very recently, when a simultaneous and urgent request, from Christians of four denominations, among whom were two ministers of the Gospel, has induced the owner of the manuscript to consent to its being printed. This is consented to from a deep conviction that *Providence seems to call* for the publication of the manuscript, and therefore the owner is in duty bound to *obey the call*, and make the sacrifice of private feeling which is required, in throwing before the eye of the public what was originally written solely for the use of a Christian friend.

Doubtless there will be many to cavil at the doctrine, and ridicule the Christian experience recorded in these pages, though they agree with the holy Scriptures. Those who will dare to trifle with, and make light of the inspired word of God, and exalt sceptical reasoning above the truth itself, have never scrupled to doubt the reality of Christian experience, and never will scruple to ridicule it, as absurd. With such we have nothing to do : to their own Master, they must stand or fall. Rom. xiv., 4.

But these Views of the Trinity are published for the benefit of the people of God, who feel and acknowledge their need of a divine Saviour, and who desire to be built up in the most holy faith of the Gospel of Christ.

A Presbyterian minister from a distance writes thus : " They contain many things which might with profit be more extensively diffused, for the comfort and edification of the people of God, than is possible without the aid of the press."

To such, therefore, these pages are addressed in their publication ; and that the Spirit of God may apply the truths contained in them to their hearts with power, is the fervent prayer of your fellow-servant in the Lord.

Jan. 1st, 1853.

“ The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom : but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness ; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” I. Cor. i., 22-24.

The proceeds from the publication of this little volume are to be devoted to furnishing the destitute with the written word of God, the Holy Bible. It is not designed as a speculation for *worldly gain*, but as an investment for *spiritual good*.

PART I.

Views of the Trinity.

CHAPTER I.

To Mrs. ———.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Living, as we do, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, and under the ministration of the Gospel by the Spirit, surely our knowledge of God, and of the economy of his grace, as exhibited in the plan of salvation, ought to surpass that of the fathers, who lived under the comparatively dark dispensation of the Old Testament. “For if the ministration of death, written and graven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be

done away : how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious." II. Cor., iii., 7, 8. "For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." 11 v.

And our knowledge of these things ought, at least, to be equal to that of the apostles ; seeing that we live in an advanced age of the world, possessing the whole Revelation, and enjoying the accumulated light of nearly six thousand years. We have collected in the holy Bible a mass of evidence, to which each of the prophets, and most of the apostles contributed ; besides this, we have also the light of authentic history, showing the *fulfilment* of many prophecies which they recorded by the pen of inspiration. And with the Bible in our hands, under the ministration of the Spirit, surely we ought to have as just conceptions of Deity, and of the plan of redemption, as the apostles themselves had. But is this the case with the great majority of Christians ? And why is it not so ? I answer, It is because Christians

generally, *do not study the whole Scriptures perseveringly and with prayer.* This is the reason why the standard of Christian experience is, at the present day, so far below what it has been in some periods of the world.

But the minds of many in our midst are aroused to reflection on this subject, and it is with pleasure, my dear friend, that I now comply with your request, and write out for your use my views of the holy Trinity, as manifested to my soul in my Christian experience. In doing so, I shall bear my testimony to the deep communion and fellowship which Christians may enjoy with the triune God, through a right apprehension of his character, as it is manifested in the offices of Father, Son and Spirit.

But first, I will give the *ground of my faith* in believing the existence of Three Persons in the Godhead, as I draw it from the holy Scriptures.

From a careful investigation of the Scriptures, I am convinced that the Old Testament

repeatedly mentions a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, speaking of God in distinct offices, as Father, Son and Spirit. But the more express declaration of the *unity* of these three Persons in *One*, was reserved for the teaching of Christ, as made known to us in the New Testament.

The Old Testament opens with the announcement of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, thus : “ And God said, Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness.” Gen., i., 26. Next, God gave an intimation of the coming of Christ, and of his vicarious sufferings, in the curse pronounced against the serpent, Gen. iii., 15. And in the appointment of lambs for sacrifice, Gen. iv., 4. After this, we find God assuming the appearance of the human form, and in this form conversing with the men Abraham, Jacob, Moses and Joshua, as follows : “ And the Lord appeared unto him (Abraham) in the plains of Mamre, and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo, *three men* stood by him.” Gen. xviii., 1, 2. “ And the Lord said, Shall

I hide from Abraham that thing which I do ? 17 v. And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it. 20, 21 vs. And the men turned their faces from thence, and *went towards Sodom*; but Abraham stood yet before the Lord." 22 v.

In the next chapter we read, "And there came *two angels to Sodom* at even," 1 v., who evidently were the men spoken of in the 22d verse of the 18th chapter, and who were also called "the men," by the men of Sodom. Leaving these two angels, or men, as they appeared to be, engaged in fulfilling their mission to Lot and his family, by bringing them out of Sodom and conducting them to a place of safety, we return to the third of the men, who remained with Abraham after the other two had gone on their way to Sodom. This third man was evidently *the Lord*, as the narrative teaches, thus: "But Abraham stood yet before the Lord. And

Abraham drew near and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous in the city. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. And Abraham said, Behold now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes. Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for the lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it." Gen. xviii., 22-28 vs., and so on to the end of the 33d verse: "And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned to his place."

The language of these chapters evidently teaches that the Lord, accompanied by two created angels, appeared to Abraham in the forms of men—that two of these men, called in the next chapter "two angels," were sent forward on their mission to Lot, in Sodom,

while the third, who was the Lord himself, remained with Abraham. And Abraham, in interceding with him for Sodom, addressed him as “the Lord,” and “the Judge of all the earth;” while he, in the language of *omniscience* and *omnipotence*, declared, “If *I find* in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then *I will spare* all the place for their sakes.” 26 v. This is strong and definite language.

God appeared also to Jacob in human form, thus : “And Jacob was left alone ; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.” Gen. xxxii., 24. “And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel : for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.” 30 v. And in allusion to this event, the inspired prophet Hosea says of Jacob, “By his strength he had power with God : yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed : he wept and made supplication unto him : he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us ; even the Lord God of hosts ; the Lord is his memorial.” Hosea, xii., 3-5.

Moses said, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." Deut. vi., 4. And God, speaking to Moses, said, "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live." Ex. xxxiii., 20. Yet, speaking of Moses, God said to Aaron and Miriam, "With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and *the similitude of the Lord shall he behold.*" Num. xii., 8.

"And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood a man over against him, with his sword drawn in his hand; and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy: and Joshua did so." Josh. v., 13-15.

Now, if no man could see God and live, as God expressly declared to Moses, in Ex. xxxiii., 20: and yet the Lord did appear to Abraham, Jacob, Moses and Joshua, all of whom not only saw him with the eyes of the body, but conversed with him “face to face,” as Jacob said, Gen. xxxii., 30: then it is evident that God did not appear to Abraham, Jacob, Moses and Joshua in his essential nature, for that could not be seen by any living man; but in the *likeness of human flesh*, here called “a man”—“the similitude of the Lord”—“the captain of the host of the Lord”—and elsewhere named the “Messenger of the covenant.” Mal. iii., 1. “And *the angel of his presence* saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them and carried them *all the days of old*. But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit.” Isa. lxiii., 9. In this verse, and to the end of the chapter, the inspired penman is referring to the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and their forty years wanderings through the wilderness, during which the

captain of their salvation led them. In II. Chronicles, xiii., 12, it is said, "And behold God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets." And Paul says, in Heb. ii., 9-18, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 9, 10 vs. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." 16 v. This language plainly infers that this "Jesus," "the Captain of their salvation," must have existed in another nature before "he took on him the seed of Abraham;" and it is expressly said, "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels." What nature, then, had the Captain of salvation, before he humbled himself to be born of a virgin, and was named Jesus?

Hear what the Jewish Chronicles assert: "And behold God himself is with us for our captain." Then St. Paul testifies that "Jesus is the Captain of their salvation," and that "he took upon him the seed of Abraham."

From the consideration of the above passages of Scripture, with many others, it is very evident to my mind that it was Christ, the second person of the Godhead, whom St. John calls the Word, that assumed by *anticipation* the human form of the "only begotten Son of God," and appeared to Abraham as a *man*. Gen. xviii. ch. Also to Jacob as a *man*, with whom he wrestled, and of whom Jacob said, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." Gen. xxxii., 30. Afterwards to Moses, as "the Angel of the Lord." Ex. iii., 2. Then also to Joshua, as "a man with a drawn sword in his hand," Josh. v., 13, this man announced himself to be the "Captain of the host of the Lord," bidding Joshua, "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is *holy*." Now observe, this was the very

same command given to Moses, when God appeared to him in the burning bush: "And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when *the Lord* saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses! Moses! And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet: for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for *he was afraid to look upon God.*" Ex. iii., 2-6.

Neither did the man who appeared to Joshua, as the "Captain of the host of the Lord," refuse the worship of Joshua, "and Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship." When created angels appeared

on earth to men, they always refused to accept the worship of men. For instance : “ And I, John, saw these things and heard them. And when I heard, and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then said he unto me, *See thou do it not* : for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets : *worship God.*” Rev. xxii., 8, 9. And the prophet Hosea, speaking of *the man* with whom Jacob wrestled, calls him “ the angel,” and then adds, “ Even the Lord God of hosts, the Lord is his memorial.” Hos. xii., 3–5.

Thus it is evident to my mind that God does exist in a way that man cannot behold and live ; and yet, that he has revealed himself to man, from the earliest ages of the world, in a way that man could behold and live. He has declared that his essential existence or glory is greater than any living man can behold ; but it is equally evident that God did appear to Abraham, Jacob, Moses and Joshua, in a form, and in the human form ; whether that form was material

or immaterial we do not know ; but we do know that in that form called “ a man,” and “ the angel,” he both claimed the prerogative of Deity, and exercised the attributes of Jehovah. And in this fact I discover a plain intimation of the existence of two persons and offices in the Godhead, though it is clothed in mystery. The intimation given was like unto the glimmering of a distant star ; or like the first beams of the rising sun, which only serve to render darkness visible :—afterwards, the light steadily advanced towards the perfect day.

Next we hear holy Job exclaiming, in the assurance of a perspective faith : “ For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth : and though after my skin worms destroy this body, *yet in my flesh shall I see God.*” Job xix., 25.

David also exclaims, in the xlv. Psalm : “ Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever : the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest

wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." 6, 7 vs. And the Apostle Paul, in the first chapter to the Hebrews, quotes the words of the Psalmist as prophetic of Christ, and in proof of his Deity: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, *by whom also he made the worlds*; who, being the brightness of his glory, and the *express image of his person*, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee? (Ps. ii., 7.) And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son. (II. Sam., vii., 14.) And again, When he

bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. (Ps. xcvi., 7-9.) And of the angels he saith, Who maketh the angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. (Ps. civ., 4.) But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever : a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom : thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity ; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. (Ps. xlv., 6, 7.) But thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. (Gen. i., 1.) They shall perish ; but thou remainest : and they all shall wax old, as doth a garment : and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed ; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. (Ps. cii., 25-27.) But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool ? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them

who shall be heirs of salvation? (Ps. cx., l.) Heb. i. ch. In this chapter the inspired apostle, Paul, quotes passages from various parts of Scripture, to prove the divinity of Christ, and that Jesus Christ was "the Son of God," of whom David prophecied. Herein he asserts that Christ the Son was a co-worker with the Father, when he laid the foundations of the earth, and that the heavens are the work of his hands, making him equal with God the Creator. He also declares his equality with the Father in glory, "being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person." In this last clause the apostle speaks of two distinct persons in the Godhead, and ascribes omnipotence to the Son, when he says that he "upholds all things by the word of his power."

Isaiah prophecied, saying, "I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims:—And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the

Lord of hosts : the whole earth is full of his glory." Is. vi., 1-3. And the apostle John tells us, speaking of Jesus Christ, "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory and spake of him." John xii., 41.

Ezekiel also says, "And upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw, as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord." Ezek. i., 26-28. Isaiah says more boldly, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign : Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isa. vii., 14. Immanuel, being interpreted, God with us, agrees with what Paul wrote to the Romans, viii., 3. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his

Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." 4 v.

Isaiah again says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." Isa. ix., 6, 7. And Paul, writing to the Colossians, says of the "Son," "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created *by him*, and *for him*: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church." Col. i., 15-18.

"And Jesus cried, saying, He that believ-

eth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me: and he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me." John xii., 44, 45. Paul, writing to the Philippians, says, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be *equal with God*: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. ii., 5-11.

John also bare record, saying, "In the *beginning* was the Word, and the Word was with God, *and the Word was God*. The same was in the beginning with God. All things

were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, *and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.* He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me : for he was before me. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time ; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent Priests and Levites from Jerusalem, to ask him, Who art thou ? And he confessed and denied not ; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then ? Art thou Elias ? And he said, I am not. Art thou that prophet ? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou ? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself ? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias." (See Isa. xl., 3.) John i., 1-23.

What language can be more decidedly de-

clarative of the divinity of Christ? Surely nothing but wilful unbelief can misinterpret such plain assertions. Here the Evangelist John, the beloved disciple, asserts plainly that "the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. That all things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." 1, 2, 3 vs. Then he says, in 14 v., "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." And he goes on to tell us that, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son (whom he names Jesus Christ in 17 v.) which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." 18 v. John Baptist also testified, that Jesus Christ came after himself, but was before him: "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me, for he was before me. 29, 30 vs. And I saw and bare record, that this is the Son of God." 34 v.

From these Scriptures I am assured that when God appeared to, and conversed with Abraham, Jacob, Moses and Joshua, it was not God existing as the Father, or essence of Deity, which appeared to their bodily senses, and also spoke to them ; but it was God the Word or Son, whose presence they beheld in the human form ; and who appeared to them in the character of God, both claiming and exercising the attributes of Deity, while seemingly but a man.

God said to Moses, at the burning bush, when he appeared as the Angel of the Lord, "I am that I am. And he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you : this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations. Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The Lord God of your fath-

ers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, hath appeared unto me, saying," etc. Ex. iii., 14-16. It was in allusion to this appearance of God to Moses, that Christ spake to the Jews, when they asked him, "Art thou greater than our father Abraham, and the prophets that are dead? Whom makest thou thyself? Jesus answered, If I honour myself my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me, of whom ye say, that he is your God. Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him and keep his saying. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, *Before Abraham was, I am.* Then took they up stones to cast at him; but Jesus hid himself." John viii., 53-59. Again soon after, Jesus said to the Jews, "I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up

stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father ; for which of these works do ye stone me ? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not ; but for blasphemy, and because that thou, *being a man, makest thyself God*. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods ? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken : say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God ? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though you believe not me, believe the works : that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him. Therefore they sought again to take him ; but he escaped out of their hands." John x., 30-39.

Thus we perceive, that however modern wise men explain away the words of Christ,

and assert that he never meant to teach that he was God ; we are here assured that the ancient Jews, to whom he spake, understood him to say, that he claimed equality with God the Father, and accused him of blasphemy, “because that thou, *being a man, makest thyself God.*” 33 v. And Christ did not tell them that they misunderstood his meaning, but went on with his argument, to prove that he had not been guilty of blasphemy in asserting that he and the Father are one. 30 v. And it was in virtue of the in-dwelling Deity’s being united to the human nature of Jesus Christ, that he said to the Jews, “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me : and he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.” John xii., 44, 45. Again, “Jesus saith unto Thomas, I am the way, and the truth, and the life : no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also : and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the

Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the *Father that dwelleth in me*, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very work's sake." John xiv., 6-11. And so fully were John and Philip convinced by the teaching of Jesus Christ, on this occasion of the institution of the Lord's Supper, that we hear no more questions asked by them on this point of doctrine; but we hear Thomas, a few days afterwards, when Christ appeared in the midst of his disciples, eight days after his resurrection, thus, "Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst and said, Peace be unto you. Then said he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand,

and thrust it into my side ; and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God ! Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed ; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." John xx., 26-29.

The Spirit of the Lord is also expressly mentioned in the Old Testament, as acting in *distinct personality*, and holding a distinct office in the Godhead, as a few select passages will show : " Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor, hath taught him ? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding ?" Isa. xl., 13, 14. Here he claims to be infinite in wisdom and knowledge, two attributes of Jehovah.

In the history of the creation, contained in the very first chapter of the Bible, it is written, " In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was with-

out form, and void ; and darkness was upon the face of the deep ; and the *Spirit of God* moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light : and there was light." Gen. i., 1-3. Here, in the very opening of Revelation, the Spirit of God is named as performing an office in the work of creation. And the history of creation goes on with, "And God said, Let there be" ——— "and it was so ;" until all was created excepting man. Then, when God was about to create man in his own image, he says, speaking in a plurality of consultation, "And God said, Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness : and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him : male and female created he them." 26, 27 v. Man, then, in his mysterious union of body, soul and spirit, was a creation after the likeness of his Creator,

for, "in the image of God created he him." 27 v. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Gen. ii., 7.

The prophet Ezekiel speaks much of the personality of the Holy Spirit, throughout all his writings: "Then the Spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of great rushing, saying, Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place." Ezek. iii., 12. "So the Spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in the bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me. Then I came to them of the captivity at Tel-abib, that dwelt by the river Chebar." 14, 15 vs. "And the hand of the Lord was there upon me: and he said unto me, Arise, go forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee. Then I arose and went forth into the plain: and behold the glory of the Lord stood there, as the glory which I saw by the river Chebar: and I fell on my face. Then the Spirit entered into me, and

set me upon my feet, and spake with me, and said unto me, Go, shut thyself within thy house." 22-24 vs. "And I will make thy tongue cleave unto the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprovcr: for they are a rebellious house. But when I speak with thee I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God." 26, 27 vs. Again, "As I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord God fell there upon me. Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire; and from his loins even upwards, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber. And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of my head: and the Spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem." viii., 1-3. "Moreover, the Spirit lifted me up, and brought me unto the east gate of the Lord's house." Ezek. xi., 1.

“And the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak: Thus saith the Lord; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel; for I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them.” 5 v. “Afterwards the Spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity. So the vision I had seen went up from me. Then I spake to them of the captivity all the things that the Lord had showed me.” 24, 25 vs.

In these verses, it is the Holy Spirit that speaks to the prophet, commanding Ezekiel to repeat his words, saying, “Thus saith the Lord God.” iii., 27. Here, also, he claims the attributes of omniscience and omnipresence, and exercises omnipotence in constraining the prophet to go, even in the heat and bitterness of his spirit, *when* and *where* the hand of the Lord God pleased; and to speak, or not to speak, as the Spirit directed. Here, then, we find the Spirit acting in distinct personality, and yet claiming to be the Lord

God. Who, then, will venture to deny the personality of the Holy Spirit ?

Isaiah, prophecying of the coming of Christ, speaks of both the Son and Spirit, in distinct personality, thus : “ And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jessie, and a branch shall grow out of his roots : And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of fear of the Lord.” Isa. xi., 1, 2. Hear John’s testimony of the fulfilment of this, ages after : “ And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him (Jesus). And I knew him not ; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record, that this is the Son of God.” John i., 32-34.

Jeremiah too, prophecied of Christ thus :

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness.” Jer. xxiii., 5, 6. Zechariah prophesied: “Hear now, O Joshua, the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for behold, I will bring forth my servant, the Branch.” Zech. iii., 8.

The Apostle John farther testifies: “Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ: not by water only, but by water and blood.” (I understand this of the water of baptism which he received by John Baptist, and the blood of atonement which he shed in Gethsemane, and upon the cross.) “And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are

three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and *these three are one*. And there are three that bear witness in the earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and *these three agree in one*. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life: and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life: and he that hath not the Son, hath not life. These things have I written *unto you that believe* on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." I. John, v., 5-13. And he goes on to write, in the 20th verse, thus: "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him

that is true ; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. *This is the true God, and eternal life.* Little children keep yourselves from idols. Amen." 20, 21 vs.

CHAPTER II.

THE above passages of Scripture are but a few of the many that might be quoted to prove that Moses, the patriarchs, and all the prophets, as well as the New Testament writers, believed and declared the existence of a triune Deity—speaking of Father, Son, and Spirit, as one God.

But though Moses and the Old Testament prophets made frequent mention of Father, Son, and Spirit, yet it was in mysterious language, which *perhaps* they themselves had but an indistinct conception of. Be this as it may, we know that the honour of declaring the *distinct personality*, and yet *mystical union* of the persons of the Godhead, was reserved for the teaching of Christ, under the Gospel dispensation. And the honour of explaining still more fully the great plan of

man's redemption, as accomplished by the triune God, was reserved for the "ministration of the Spirit," after Christ had completed his vicarious sufferings on earth, and had ascended to "the right hand of the Majesty on high," there to appear as the High Priest and Intercessor for his people. See John xx., 17; Eph. iv., 8; II. Cor., iii., 7, 8; Heb. i., 3.

According to the declarations of Scripture, I believe, that there is but one living and true God; that in him existed from eternity three mysterious Persons, namely, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; that these three are one in essence, and equal in power and glory; that, in consequence of Adam's sin, and fall from his state of innocence, in which God had created him, the curse of death, temporal and eternal, was incurred by Adam, and the whole human race, for which he stood before God as their covenant head and representative. Then the three Persons in the one God entered into covenant together, and engaged by an act of free grace to save man from endless ruin. And in order

to secure man's salvation, the Three in One engaged, by promise and by oath, each to act a part in their respective offices: for, when *justice*, in the office of the Father, demanded atonement for the sin of man, then *mercy*, in the office of the co-eternal Word, offered to become that atonement, by taking upon himself a human body, and thus, in the form of a servant, to bear the curse of sin, and fulfil the law by his obedience, even unto death, and so to offer that body as a sacrifice to the offended justice of God. This offered atonement Justice instantly accepted, and, in the office of the Father, engaged to create and prepare a body, by the co-operation of the Holy Ghost, so that the eternal Word might inhabit it without taint of sin, and yet become both God and man in one person.

No sooner had poor fallen Adam sinned, than he hid himself "from the presence of the Lord God, among the trees of the garden." Gen. iii., 8. And even before the penalty of sin was pronounced against the guilty man and his wife, hear the Lord God announcing

the first intimation of mercy to fallen man, in his address to the serpent, or Satan, thus : “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed : it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” 15 v. This was the first intimation of “help laid upon one that is mighty.” “Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty ; I have exalted one chosen out of the people.” Ps. lxxxix., 19. From this time forth, God began to reveal his plan of salvation to fallen man in a variety of ways, as the Holy Scriptures teach, and as many passages here quoted have plainly shown.

Meanwhile, time rolled on for four thousand years, and when the appointed time predicted by Daniel and others had arrived, behold ! an angel was sent from heaven to earth, to tell a poor virgin of the house of David, of the “Wonderful” conception which she was appointed to bear, and which was an exact fulfilment of the prophecy by Isaiah

vii., 14 and ix., 6. “And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this thing be? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” Luke i., 30–35. Thus was the human body of Christ prepared by the Creator Father and the Holy Ghost, without the least taint of sin, and by a miraculous conception of his virgin mother, and when “that holy thing,” as the angel called it, came forth into the world, it was recognized to be “the only begotten Son of

the Father ;” or in John’s words, “ The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” John i., 14.

At his baptism by John Baptist, the Holy Ghost descended upon him visibly in the form of a dove, as a sign that he was entering upon his work as a teacher sent from God on a mission of peace ; and thus at the inauguration of Christ, the Anointed of God, there was made for the *first time*, a manifestation of the *whole trinity at once* : for Jesus Christ, the Word, was upon the earth, receiving the ordinance of baptism in human form ; the Holy Ghost descended from heaven *visibly*, in the form of a dove, and remained upon him ; while the Father spake with a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Matt. iii., 13–17 ; John i., 29–34. Thus gloriously was ushered in the Gospel dispensation !

We have seen how Christ, in his public preaching to the Jews, and his private instructions to his disciples, had repeatedly

insisted upon his being one with the Father, and had asserted his mysterious union with the Father, as a point of doctrine which they ought not to be ignorant of. When Philip asked, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us, Jesus said unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" John xiv., 8, 9. Let us now see how Christ, on that same occasion of his last supper, and last conversation with his disciples before his crucifixion, went on to lead them a step higher up the ladder of spiritual instruction: The disciples being told that he was about to leave them, became very sad, and Christ, to comfort them, said, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that *he* may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and *shall be in you.*" John

xiv., 16, 17. Again, "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." 25, 26 vs. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." John xv., 26, 27. "Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." John xvi., 6, 7. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall

hear, that shall he speak, and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me : for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine : therefore said I that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." 12-15 vs. Again : "The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world ; again I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples said unto him, (perceiving that he had answered the thoughts of their heart,) Lo, now thou speakest plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now we are sure that *thou knowest all things*, and needest not that any man should ask thee : by this we believe that thou camest forth from God." John xvi., 27-30.

In these verses Christ reveals deep things in the plan of salvation : he teaches plainly and distinctly the personality of Father, Son and Spirit, each in a distinct office, acting a part in the economy of grace : thus securing,

as by a threefold cord of grace woven by Jehovah, the one living and true God, the salvation of fallen man, on certain conditions. And in order to strengthen our confidence in the triune God, he named the Holy Ghost "the Spirit of truth and the Comforter," whom the Father would send in his name, and then added, "The Comforter whom I will send you from the Father." "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." But observe, he also told them that they had many things to learn, which their faith was not as yet strong enough to receive, but which the Holy Spirit would make plain to their understanding in the appointed time. John xvi., 12, 13. Thus Jesus informed his disciples that his ministration on earth in person was then being wound up, and a new dispensation of grace about to be ushered in, namely, "the ministration of the Spirit, (II. Cor., iii., 8,) which they were to receive as the consequent of his departure to the bosom of the Father,

and which would be more glorious than the dispensation under which they then were. And accordingly, when Christ had fully accomplished his mission on earth, having sealed it with his blood, while hanging on the cross, and just before he yielded up the ghost, he cried, "It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." John xix., 30.

After his resurrection, he appeared unto his disciples, and said unto them, "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." John xx., 21, 22. St. Luke also tells us that, in his last appearance to his disciples before his ascension, "Then opened he their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day. And ye are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you ;

but tarry ye at Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high. And he led them out as far as to Bethany: and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy." Luke xxvi., 45-52.

After Jesus Christ had ascended up, and "sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high," (Heb. i., 3,) as St. Paul tells us, the Holy Ghost descended on the day of Pentecost, (as described in the 2d chapter of the Acts,) and took up the work on earth, as the Teacher, Sanctifier and Comforter of the fold of Christ: and thus the "ministration of the Spirit" was ushered in with the conversion of three thousand souls in one day—the first fruits of the triumph of the cross.

St. Paul also testifies, "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them

that love him.” (So said Isaiah lxiv., 4, for he was under the comparatively dark dispensation of the Old Testament ; but Paul, living under the ministration of the Spirit, adds,) “ But God hath revealed them *unto us* by his Spirit : for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.” I. Cor., ii., 9, 10. Yet how little do Christians of the present day comprehend this fellowship with Father, Son and Spirit. And yet it is no new thing, for the Apostle John wrote thus to the churches : “ That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us ; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” I. John, i., 3.

I learn from the Scriptures that the Father wills the salvation of the sinner, and predestinates to eternal life, and then makes the soul willing to be saved on his own conditions : “ Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.” Ps. cx., iii. But the soul becomes willing through the influences of the

“Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father.” For Christ said, “No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” John vi., 44. Thus the Spirit of God draws the soul, by enlightening influences, teaching its need of a Saviour, and enabling it to *act faith* upon the promises of God’s word. The Spirit also indites the prayers of Christians: “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God.” Rom. viii., 26, 27. And these prayers, going through Christ our High Priest, are accepted by the Father, in virtue of Christ’s righteousness and obedience, which are imputed to the Christian through his faith in Christ, his Atonement.

The Holy Spirit, therefore, is the agent by

whom God acts in the conviction and conversion of the sinner, as well as in building up the believer in faith and hope; yet how mysteriously is this accomplished. The man whose conscience is awakened by the Spirit, whether he be an unconverted sinner or a believer in Christ, feels the influences of the Spirit in his soul, is conscious of the instruction and assistance given, is fully aware of being under a powerful, constraining influence. But he is completely ignorant of the *manner* in which Mind acts upon mind, or how the Spirit enters his soul and works in him that *faith* by which he believes, to the saving of his soul. “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” John iii., 8. As the Holy Spirit is omnipotent in his influences, so he is inscrutable in his operations: nor can we know more of him than he has himself revealed to finite minds. But in what the Holy Spirit has revealed through the

Holy Scriptures, and in the application of the truths contained in them to my own mind and heart, I discover the infinite justice, truth, goodness, mercy, love, wisdom and power of God, not only in planning, but also in revealing his wondrous plan of salvation to fallen man.

But of the essential nature of the Godhead I understand nothing, because God has not explained it to man. My reason or understanding is assured, from the plain declarations of the Holy Bible, that there are three persons in the Godhead, and believing, I adore—without indulging in curious, but vain speculation concerning that mystery, which I cannot fathom, because it dwells high above my reach in heaven—God's throne, and I dwell upon the earth—his footstool. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me ; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." Ps. cxxxix., 6. But, blessed be God ! I have the witness within my own soul, even "the Spirit of truth," who teaches me as much as it is proper for me to know : and thus my

own experience shows me, as plainly as that two and two are four, that there is a Trinity in the Godhead : for the Spirit hath also revealed the Father and the Son unto me in spiritual communion, though I pretend not to understand the existence of Deity in his essential nature.

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Let proud reasoners and sceptics, who doubt and deny the existence of Father, Son and Spirit, in one God, explain all the mysteries found in the material universe, before they venture into metaphysics and attempt to explain the existence of the great Jehovah, or refuse to believe in the mystery of the Godhead, because they cannot understand it. Who doubts his personal identity, or his own existence, because he cannot explain *how* his own soul and body are united? or because he cannot discover the fountain of original suggestion, and describe all the secret springs of his own thoughts? And what man has ever been able to demonstrate these mysteries within himself, to universal satis-

faction ? After all the researches of the best mental philosophers, what is mental philosophy but an *infant science* ?

Who doubts the evidence of his senses, because he cannot explain *how* and *why* it is that the grain of corn put into the ground first corrupts, then germinates and springs up in a new form, bringing forth an hundred fold grains, like that which was planted ? You may tell me that this takes place in accordance with the laws of nature—and so it does ; but do you understand those laws of nature so as to analyze them, and to change or regulate them anew ? No ; the God of nature holds those principles in his own power, nor can man change them, though he may discourse very scientifically and pompously about causes and effects.

If, then, there are mysteries in natural things, which the most learned science cannot demonstrate to satisfaction ; and if man cannot explain the lesser mystery of his own existence, or fully describe all the operations of those very faculties of his own

soul, by the exercise of which he *presumes to judge and explain away the declarations of his Maker*; what folly, what presumption it is in him, to attempt to describe the existence of the Divine Mind, or to refuse to believe in the mystery of the Godhead, because his *finite reason* can neither comprehend or explain it! What says the Apostle Paul to the Colossians about this: "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Col. ii., 2-9. Glory be to God, the mysterious co-working Trinity, for the revelation of this doctrine, which we are required

to receive on "Thus saith the Lord!" Human reasonings are required to bow to the authority of God's word, and to believe with simple *faith* what God has asserted, without explaining farther than it seemed good to him; and therefore it is that the mystery of the Godhead so often proves a stumbling block to the wise and learned of this world. Let us ever remember, the Creator who endowed us, his creatures, with rational minds, never intended us to set up our finite understanding in competition with his authority. It was Lucifer's sin, that he *aspired to be as God*. And the same spirit works in those who refuse to believe a plain declaration of the Holy Scriptures, because it is not so explained in all its parts and bearings as to be perfectly comprehensible to the human mind in this life.

CHAPTER III.

HAVING pointed out a very few passages out of the many contained in the Holy Bible, in support of the doctrine of the Trinity, and as the ground of my faith in believing, I will proceed now to give my experimental views of this sublime subject. May the Spirit of God guide and guard my pen, while I attempt to convey to the minds of others the comforting views and manifestations which God has, in his infinite mercy, bestowed upon me ! Help Lord ! lest I fail to impress other minds with precisely the same views and feelings which fill my own soul too full for utterance. For, after all, human language is but a poor medium of communication, when we would describe spiritual exercises and realities. The Saviour himself used but a figure of speech, in describing the opera-

tions of the Spirit to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. John iii., 8. And Nicodemus, astonished, asked, "How can these thing be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?" John iii., 9, 10.

I have remarked, among the number of Christians with whom I have conversed on experimental religion, that there are very few who have any definite ideas of the Holy Trinity, even though the doctrine itself is a decided article of their faith. That is, they possess a *saving faith*, but have not an *understanding faith*. This saving faith will carry them to heaven; but if they had understanding faith, their enjoyment of religion would be much greater, and more pure. They have a more definite conception of the person of Christ, than of the Father and Spirit; and the reason of this is very obvious, for the Godhead of Christ being veiled in flesh—in humanity—their faith takes hold on an object of sense: and thus there is little difficulty in bringing before the mind *God in*

human form, in a body like our own, which Jesus, the co-eternal Word, assumed. Thus they have a distinct realizing apprehension of "God manifest in the flesh," I. Tim., iii., 16, and if in devotion *faith realizes* his spiritual presence, the soul finds no difficulty in communing with God in Christ. It is thus that the soul *learns to approach Deity*, and it is only in and by Christ that fallen man can ever find acceptance at the throne of the heavenly grace.

Blessed be God, that he has stooped to our finite capacities, and came to us as the man Christ Jesus—that he has gone back to heaven in that very body, and now presents himself to our mind, for our adoring worship, in a human form. So that the mind is not compelled to roam through trackless regions of uncertainty, in pursuit of an unknown and incomprehensible God, but, "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith," Heb. xii., 2, we meet and adore "God manifest in the flesh."

Thus the babe in grace is enabled to com-

prehend, in a measure, God the Son ; while the Father and Spirit are as yet utterly beyond his apprehension. Yet he believes with simple faith in the existence of those persons of the Godhead, whom he only knows by name or by indefinite experience. And afterwards, as the soul, still growing in grace, becomes more enlightened and sanctified, it is taught and led by “the Spirit of truth,” to penetrate through Christ by faith, and to recognize and worship the Father and Spirit in their respective offices. We see a figure of this in the arrangement of the temple worship, under the Mosaic dispensation :—In the Jewish temple there were three divisions,—first, the court of the temple, where the congregation generally worshipped ; secondly, the holy place, which was separated from the court by a curtain or veil, and in the holy place were kept holy things, which were concealed from the eyes of those who tarried in the court of the temple, namely, “the candle-stick, and the table, and the shew-bread ;” and thirdly, “after the second

veil, the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all, which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant, and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat, of which we cannot now speak particularly. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God; but into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost thus signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while the first tabernacle was as yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience—which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings and carnal ordinances, im-

posed on them till the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God!" Heb. ix.

Here the Apostle shows that Christ came, and by the sacrifice of himself gained admittance for his people into the holiest of all, and carrying on his argument, he exhorts thus: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is

to say, his flesh ; and having an high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promised." And again : "Cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." Heb. x., 19-35.

The Apostle Paul has told us, on the authority of inspiration, these things in the Jewish temple were a figure of things to come, as we have just read. And so do we Christians find, as we advance^e in the spiritual temple, that we first entered the court, then the holy place, and afterwards we gain admittance into the holiest of all, making discoveries, as we advance, of things more and more spiritual, holy, secret and precious.

Thus it appears to my mind that God, in the economy of his grace, first reveals himself in Christian experience, or manifests himself to the soul of the young convert, in

the second person of the Trinity : for though the communication is made through the influences of the Holy Spirit, yet the Spirit acts, as it were, out of sight, while he reveals Christ the anointed of God, to the soul of the new convert, who is thus directed to “God manifested in the flesh”—to Christ, the only Mediator between God and man. “For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” I. Tim., ii., 5. And Timothy adds in the next chapter, “And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness : God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” Tim. iii., 16.

Then, secondly, when he that was a babe in grace, becomes so vigorous in faith as to require the “strong meat” of the Gospel, (Heb. v., 12,) then the soul is prepared to receive more spiritual manifestations of Deity, and is led by the Spirit into a farther acquaintance with the Trinity, in the know-

ledge of God the Father, who is the first person in the Godhead. Thus the Holy Spirit, still proceeding from the Father and the Son, (John xv., 26, Matt. iii., 11,) and working mysteriously by enlightening influences, reveals to the understanding the Father, in distinct personality and mystical union with the Godhead. Or, in other words the Father is now manifested to the soul, as holding and filling his own distinct office in the Trinity ; and thus the soul realizes its relation to this heavenly Parent.

Thirdly, the soul is afterwards led into still deeper experimental knowledge of God, when the Holy Spirit manifests himself as the third person in the Godhead, and as filling his own distinct place in the glorious Trinity. Before this the Spirit acted out of sight or reach of faith, behind a curtain, as it were ; but now this veil is withdrawn, and the eye of faith receives a purely ethereal view of God, abstracted from earthly relations, and the soul, entering "the holiest of all," bows before the Majesty of heaven, that Glory which dwelt

between the cherubims above “the mercy-seat.” Then it is that the believer *realizes*, for the first time, that the secret and constraining influence under which he had acted hitherto, and by which he had been instructed and comforted, proceeded not alone from the Father and Son, but *through* them from a distinct and third person in the Godhead, who is revealed to his astonished faith in a Stream of Glory, which cannot be described by human language or illustrated by earthly similes, as can the Father and the Son: yet must be worshipped and thought of with reverence, awe, wonder, love and praise. If there is an emblem in the material universe which may be used to illustrate the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, I should say it is the sun; but it is as far above such as heaven is above the earth, and can only be realized through strong and vivid actings of faith, that faith which is “the evidence of things not seen” by the eyes of the body. At such a season, *the Glory of the Lord* is the all-absorbing object of the soul’s perception, and

it remains in silent adoration and contemplation of the fulness of the Godhead. This is, in a peculiar sense, what the Scriptures call the baptism of the Holy Ghost: this is to receive an unction from on high! O the full blessedness of entering thus into "the holiest of all," and by faith realizing, in a degree, the glory of the triune God: the Holy Ghost occupying and shining forth from the centre of the mercy-seat, and those rays of glory reflecting upon and reaching the soul, surrounding and shedding the light of heaven into every part. O it is then that meekly bowing and sinking into the depths of humility, the soul finds itself plunged into the ocean of God's love, and, without reserve, exclaims in the language of ardent piety, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Then, also, it is that the soul not only reads its perfect security under the economy of grace, but comprehends distinctly the part which each person of the Trinity acts in the work of man's salvation. Hitherto "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but

now mine eye seeth thee." Job xlii., 5. For now I experience that each person of the Godhead is engaged in my behalf. Do I want any thing, either spiritual or temporal? My Father knows it, and will bestow what is best for me; and more I desire not. Do I want a friend in adversity? This Jesus, the God-man, can and does sympathize with me under all the ills of life. "A brother is born for adversity," and he is the "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother," as all of his afflicted ones well know in their experience. Do I want instruction, comfort, sanctification, strength or joy? The Holy Ghost, the Comforter, is ready to bestow upon me all I need, and he does work mightily in my soul, and is able to teach and make me willing to fulfil all that is required of me, and will do it, "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." Ephes. i., 6.

For several years after my conversion, as well as for twelve months previous to that

event, I was frequently brought into contact with Socinian principles and arguments, and listened to the sophistry of *reason*, from the lips of one gifted with a superior and highly cultivated intellect, till my brain was in a whirl, and my mind distracted with anxious solicitude, lest the object of my dearest earthly affections should be reasoned into Socinianism or infidelity. I had been educated a Trinitarian, and could perceive the pernicious effects of those conversations in the sceptical remarks which occasionally grated upon my ear ; but I had myself such indefinite ideas of the Trinity, that I had no arguments to offer in support of my belief in the existence of three persons in one God, except, “It is written—thus saith the Lord.” And on many occasions I was driven to my knees in prayer, from agony of mind not easily described. For the plausible though deceitful reasonings of man, backed by the temptations of Satan and the unbelief of my own heart, raised fearful conflicts in my breast, which compelled me to cry mightily

to God for help. The plan of salvation seemed dark and intricate, and the Trinity a mystery which bewildered my mind at a glance; and I was thus led to implore God to send such light into my soul as would enable me “to give to every man that asketh, a reason of the hope that is in me.” I. Pet., iii., 15. God heard my prayer and answered it, but in *his own time*. For four years after my conversion, I made but little progress in an understanding knowledge of God. I possessed a saving faith in Christ, and often had an apprehension of his spiritual presence; but I beheld him in faith afar off, and with very indistinct conceptions as to his personality. But when I attempted to look to the Father and Spirit, I was confounded—I could not discern “the deep things of God.” I could not conceive of the Father and Spirit as existing in form, nor did I comprehend their offices; and therefore, whenever my soul held communion with God, it was by an act of faith, which simply recognized the *human form of Christ*, believing, as the Bible

teaches, that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." II. Cor., v., 19. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. vii., 25.

Now this was *saving* faith, but it was not *understanding* faith. I was like the little child, who loves and confides in its parents before it is old enough to understand the relations that exist between them: a smile from its mother makes the infant happy, but it does not yet understand the feelings which, glowing in the mother's breast, cause her to smile so sweetly on her babe. And though the babe is conscious of its mother's presence the instant she appears in sight, and that it does not behold its own dear mother the moment she withdraws her presence from its view; yet the babe cannot give you a *reason* for this knowledge. Why? Because it is not old enough to draw satisfactory deductions from its own reflections—it is but a

babe, therefore it does not understand, though it loves. But when this babe grows older, it begins to exercise the powers of its understanding, as well as those of sensation, which it was born in the exercise of. And thus it gradually acquires a knowledge of things with which it first became acquainted through sensation. By and by it becomes a man, and ought to have all the powers of the understanding in full exercise; and if so, the man will discover that God has endowed him with a rational and accountable soul: that is, if he possesses the aid of Revelation, as we have it in the Scriptures of truth, and without which, man with strongest intellect, is like a ship at sea without rudder, pilot, or chart. For it is Revelation alone that teaches us, "The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Gen. ii., 7.

This teaches us that man is composed of two natures: an animal nature, created by God in the first instance, out of the dust of

the ground ; and then this animal man was endowed with a spiritual nature or living soul, created immediately by the breath of the Lord. And these two natures, or body and soul, are most curiously held together in a mysterious union, the bond of which is the breath of his nostrils. The soul pervades the body, to which it is bound by the strongest ties of affection, and exercises an arbitrary control over its members, so long as they continue sound and healthy. But the soul cannot escape from the body by any means, without the permission of God ; neither can the soul continue in the body an instant after the mandate is given by its Creator, for its departure from its beloved clayey tabernacle.

The body has certain inherent propensities that constitute its animal nature, which nature is under sentence of death by the law, through Adam's transgression. Gen. ii., 17. But the soul is an immortal, vital and spiritual substance, endowed with certain faculties and powers, that come under the several heads of understanding, will and affections, which

are in themselves so independent of the body, that they can exist and act apart from it. And yet so dependent, during its present state of union with the body, upon its members and organs for action and development, that when the bodily senses fail from disease, or decay of age, these powers of the immortal soul seem, from their sluggish and imperfect action, also to have suffered from decay; while in fact they only appear dim, because the windows they looked out at have become darkened, as Solomon poetically expresses it in Ecc. xii., 3.

Man possesses the powers of will, affections and instinct, along with other animals, as observation teaches us; but *man* is the only animal endowed with the powers of reason and conscience, which belong to the understanding. It is the understanding, then, which raises man, in the scale of being, over the brute creation; and it is the powers of his understanding which constitute him a moral, immortal and accountable being, and render him capable of union with the high-

est good, or susceptible of remorse. And the understanding acts the part of a counsellor and guide to the will ; but the will is an arbitrary principle, which often refuses to act in accordance with the persuasive counsels of the understanding, while it exercises an absolute command over the members of the body and a persuasive control over the affections and passions. The understanding, in exercising its reasoning powers, uses the thoughts as its speculative faculty ; but *conscience* is its practical power, and God's vicegerent in the soul. And how often it is that the soul finds its conscience and its will opposed to each other ; and when the soul is not assisted by the constraining influences of the Holy Spirit, how almost universally does the will subtilely and arbitrarily pursue its own course, regardless of the reproofs of conscience—while the heart or affections, being under the persuasive influence of the will, follows the lead of its inclinations, regardless of consequences.

Thus it is that man, assisted by Revelation, and exercising his internal powers of observation and reflection, arrives at a knowledge of his own existence and of his physical and mental powers in their acts and operations, as well as of the moral developments of his own character, as influenced by circumstances around him. And we may here trace the analogy between the knowledge we may acquire of ourselves and of our own minds, in order to ascertain what duty God requires of man : and that knowledge of God, of his existence in the persons of the Trinity, and of the perfections and attributes of the Divine Mind, which we may acquire through the means of grace, and ought to possess, as accountable beings, in order to determine what we are to believe concerning God. In both cases, we are commanded and invited to investigate the truth, in humble dependence upon God's aid, while using the appointed means. And in both cases, we are also cautioned and reminded not to go beyond our depth : for beyond a certain point

we cannot go—there the Author of our being meets us with : “Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther,” and here must our researches cease, at least while we continue in this life. And beyond this appointed boundary fixed by Revelation, the proudest and most aspiring intellect in man has never yet passed.

But which of us has been so diligent in studying God’s word, so sufficiently attentive to the whispers of the Spirit, and careful to improve by meditation and practice, the lessons he teaches us through nature and providence, as to acquire all the stores of knowledge and experience opened to our investigation? Why, then, tempt the Almighty to anger, by diving into his secret decrees, and doubting the unrevealed mystery of the Divine Essence, because we cannot comprehend its existence? Alas! it is because fallen man is prone to evil, rather than to good. We have all fallen short of the grace of God by our own neglect, for God giveth wisdom liberally to all men, and upbraideth not those who ask. James i., 5. Let us then,

for the future, redeem the time we have lost, by a more diligent attendance upon the Great Teacher, through the means of grace which he has appointed, and which we have within our reach. Let us ever bear in mind that the present life is but the season of probation, and how soon it may end with us we know not; but we do know, from the declarations of inspiration, that according to the measure of our sanctification or holiness in this world will be the measure of happiness in eternity: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. vi., 7, 8.

But to return to the point of difference between saving faith and understanding faith. Revelation teaches us that *saving faith* has its seat in the heart; and I believe that it may exist in the soul which is almost devoid of understanding. I recollect reading of a

touching incident, which may serve to illustrate this position. A poor Scotch idiot, who was supposed to be entirely destitute of mind, wandered up to a gentleman's house, on a cold, stormy evening, and was hospitably afforded shelter for the night. But the poor creature was fast sinking into the arms of death. He was observed to be shivering with cold, and muttering something to himself as he sat by the kitchen fire, which attracted the attention of one of the maids, and induced her to call one of the ladies of the family to hear what "the poor daft creature was saying." They drew near to the dying idiot, who, unconscious of their observation, was repeating over, again and again, the following simple rhyme, in a broad Scotch accent :

" Three in One, and One in Three,
And Three in One will save me."

Shortly after he expired. The young lady was deeply affected by the incident, supposing it to be the simple expression of the

dying idiot's faith, who perhaps had just consciousness enough to feel his need of a Saviour, and just understanding enough to embrace the offer of salvation conveyed to him in the simple words of the rhyme which he had been taught to repeat.

Nor can we doubt that many souls are saved by simple faith in Christ's atonement, who have little or no understanding knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel. This must be the case with the illiterate generally, and with those who are converted at the eleventh hour, as was the thief upon the cross. But this fact does not absolve any one who possesses the means of instruction, from the responsibility and obligation which he, or she, is under, to cultivate the talents that God has entrusted them with, that they may be employed in his service, and for his glory. The Saviour commands us, saying, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." Matt. xxii., 37. And to do this, every faculty and power of the immortal

soul must be developed and engaged in the service of God ; and without an understanding knowledge of the doctrines and precepts of the Bible, we cannot have a very deep experimental acquaintance with “the truth as it is in Jesus.” The understanding must be enlightened by his Spirit, to enable us to receive him in his office of Prophet. And he must reign King in the exercise of his sovereignty over the will, before we can *fully* receive him into the heart, as our Priest and Atonement : then, when with an enlightened understanding, and a subdued will, we have received Christ into the heart by faith, he becomes our salvation, and we are, “In Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.” I. Cor., i., 30.

The command to grow in grace is imperative : there is no such thing as being stationary in religion, for if we are not advancing, we are losing ground. And the babe in grace should “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus

Christ," (II. Pet., iii., 18,) till he arrives "in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Ephes. iv., 13.

But to attain to this measure, there must be a *fixedness of purpose, a definite aim and persevering exertion*, in using all the means of grace which lie within our reach. And this will call into action all the powers of the soul, as auxiliaries in the exercise of faith; and while the powers of the soul are thus employed, the aid of the Holy Spirit is certain. Thus, by the diligent use of the means of grace, and the blessing of God through those means, the Christian character will become consistent and harmonious in all its parts. And without such diligence and perseverance in the pursuit of knowledge and holiness, much of the strength, beauty, and usefulness of the Christian character must be lost; and the standard of Christian experience, generally, will be low and dwarf-

ish, while Christians sit at ease in Zion, as too many of the present day do.

What is the reason that so many are induced to unite with the church of Christ, without having experienced a change of heart—and thus, while they add to its numbers, weaken its influence? It is because, as Bunyan quaintly expresses it, “Religion walks about in his silver slippers.” Or in other words, It is both fashionable and creditable to make a profession of religion, because professors of the present day, for the most part, live so much in conformity to the world, that there is little room left for the exercise of self-denial. But alas! what would such fair-weather professors do under the storms of persecution, temptation and trial?

Shall it be deemed a vain repetition, then, in view of that struggle for religious *principle*, which, judging from the signs of the times, is not far distant—the time in which every other interest shall be merged in the

question : Shall the Bible be the rule of our faith and practice, or not ? to admonish those who profess to love Christ : “ Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness ; and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace ; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God : praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” Eph. vi. ch.

PART II.

Views of the Trinity.



CHAPTER I.

“COME and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.” Ps. lxvi., 16.

WHEN I was a babe in grace I worshipped the Deity as “God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself,” and I adored the Trinity; but it was worship presented to a glorious mystery, so high above my comprehension that I was left in distance and darkness. Thus I continued for about four years after my conversion, during which period my perceptions of spiritual truths were very indistinct, and my knowledge of the doctrines of salvation exceedingly defective: consequent-

ly, I was subject to great alternations of hope and fear in my Christian experience, and greatly under bondage to the fear of death.

I had been called and "chosen in the furnace of affliction." Isa. xlviii., 10. About one year after I became a Christian, it pleased my heavenly Father to take from me the companion of my life, and that under circumstances of the most heart-rending affliction. Thus, while yet in my early youth, I found myself widowed and disconsolate. I had been for many months so absorbed by anxiety and suspense about my creature-idol, that I had in a measure grieved away the Spirit of God, and when this blow came upon me, it found me without any comforting sense of God's presence in my soul. Desolation was written on every earthly object, hope was suddenly crushed, and a kind of despair seized upon my heart, while excessive grief, like a dark cloud, veiled the face of my God from me, and obscured my prospects for eternity. But though utterly

overwhelmed by sorrow, I did not neglect the active duties of my family—these were conscientiously performed, as long as my strength held out; but I could not feel resigned to the will of God in my bereavement, and I never closed my eyes to sleep, but immediately my departed one became the subject of my dreams: then starting I awoke only to weep over my loss, and to indulge in all “the luxury of grief.” Then followed stroke after stroke from my heavenly Father’s hand, till I was ready to exclaim, in the words of the poet:

“Lord, what is this, I trembling cried,
Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death?
This is the way, the Lord replied,
I answer prayer for grace and faith.”

Indeed, so many and so bitter were the trials and sufferings laid upon me, that I passed whole nights at that time in anguish of soul, groaning and calling upon God for help. God heard and answered in his own way. My physical strength entirely forsook me, and

the poor frail body, worn out by mental suffering, was laid upon the bed of sickness. Now mental suffering ceased, a soft and tender melancholy stole over me, and my spirit became as calm and serene as an autumnal sky. The sable mantle of desolation, which to my afflicted vision had appeared to be spread over every object, for so long a time, was now withdrawn, and all nature appeared decked in new beauties—every bird, tree and flower seemed to declare the Creator's praise. I had a smile, too, for every one: for many were the kind friends who visited the feeble sufferer. For many, many months, my speedy dissolution was expected by every one, and often did I discourse with Christian friends around my bed, on the joys of heaven, and anticipate the bright "inheritance of the saints in light," till our feelings, softened and sanctified by such converse, seemed to transport us into the suburbs of heaven. In such converse, and with such feelings, I awaited my speedy dismissal from earth, and for the time felt no fear of death. But under

the increased light of the Spirit, and in greater depths of *self-knowledge*, I have since learned that much which was purely selfish was mingled with my better feelings in that, comparatively speaking, “day of small things.” Zech. iv., 10. For the thought of being reunited to my departed one in heaven actually sweetened the thought of death, and almost made me long for it. But Christ had not as yet become *All in all* to my subdued and resigned spirit; and as my physical health was again partially restored, again I began to indulge my sorrow on account of my bereavement. This inordinate indulgence of grief again, soon grieved away the comforting influences of the Holy Spirit, and I gradually sunk into a backslidden state, from which I had no power to arouse myself. Occasionally I felt a powerful conviction of the misery of my spiritual declension, and at such times I prayed most fervently to be recovered by grace, through any means that God might be pleased to use, so that I might only be restored to comfortable communion

with God. But then I would relapse again, for weeks, into the same cold and dead frame of mind. After living for many months in the state of declension which I have described, it pleased my heavenly Father to lay me suddenly upon the bed of *extreme illness* for six weeks. A highly inflammatory fever seized upon my veins, and for fourteen days I continued desperately ill, and suffering intensely in the body ; but my heart remained hard, impenitent and prayerless, and even the approach of death failed to arouse me from my spiritual torpor. I knew that, in all probability, I should die ; but I neither cared or prayed. On the fifteenth day the fever left me—still I was thankless. On the sixteenth day the fever returned with redoubled violence, and then it was that God came forth in power, and with *one word* aroused me from the slumber of spiritual death, to an awful consciousness of my dreadful condition. “Prepare to meet thy God—the hour is at hand !” resounded through my soul, filling it with terror and consternation unutterable,

till, humbled and penitent, I cried, Save, Lord, I perish! Now I was terrified at the approach of death, and roused up to cry for mercy with all that urgency of supplication and intensity of anguish, which none but a soul thus circumstanced can form a conception of. My sins arose before me in dread array; the lukewarm or cold state I had been in for months, neglected duties and unimproved privileges, a slighted and injured God—in short, an awful tribunal appeared in sight. I tried to pray; but the enemy said, “It is now *too late*.” O dreadful indeed were my feelings, while the tempter accused and suggested, “You never were a Christian, and now the day of grace is past.” Still hope lingered at my heart. Can it be possible, thought I, that I have been deceived in former experiences? I feared that I had. O what would I not have given, at that moment, for one assurance of acceptance with God. Believing firmly that I should die, I bade my nurse summon the family. Silently she obeyed, and they gathered around my

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bed. I gave all the directions concerning my temporal affairs to my executors, and then took leave of my dear little children with an agonized heart, requesting that they might not be brought into my presence again. And having settled my worldly concerns, I sent for my pastor, and disclosed my fears to him. I said, I have much to say to you, but alas! it is now *too late*—breath fails me. You have been faithful, but I have wandered from my God, and now all is dark before me. I have no light, and I fear to die; yet I cannot let go my hope in Christ. I have known delightful experiences of his love to my soul, and I have known what it is to “glory in tribulation;” but now, what would I not give for acceptance with Christ.

Deeply affected, even to tears, my good pastor replied, “Do not despair, my child; do not give up your hope in Christ; hold on firmly to that. I hope you are a child of God, but you say that you are a backslider: I never knew it, but if it has been so with you, you must expect to suffer for it; God

now hides his face from you to punish your neglect of him. But still he is a God of mercy—come now, even if you never came before, cast yourself at the feet of Jesus, and resolve that if you perish it shall be at the foot of the cross—you cannot perish there!”

I requested him to pray for me. He did so, imploring God to send light and comfort into my benighted soul. Then, wringing my hand and weeping, my dear pastor repeatedly bade me *farewell*, and left the room expecting never to see me alive again. And, O what a night of suffering that was. “A horror of great darkness fell upon me.” Gen. xv., 12. I was made to “walk through the valley of the shadow of death.” Ps. xxiii., 4. I passed by the mouth of hell, saw the flashings of God’s wrath, and heard the thunders of his anger: and, O God, who can endure them! I was assaulted by hideous mockings, temptations and horrors brought to bear upon my soul by the malice of fiends, who continued to assail me with horrid din, till I had passed through the dark valley and arrived

in an opening at the end, where Jesus met me with, "Peace, daughter, thy sins are forgiven thee." And instantly his life-giving word hushed the tumult of my agonized soul, filling me with the joy of the Holy Spirit, and with the *faith of assurance*, which has never since been shaken for an hour, that I can recollect.

It was now that Jesus drew nigh to my *eye of faith*, and for the first time revealed himself to me in a manifestation of his distinct personality, as the God-man. And no sooner was this manifestation of Christ presented to my mind, than my soul apprehending, realized both his glory and personality, and exclaimed aloud, Verily, Christ is God, and "God is love!" I held communion with Christ in person, *realizing* that in him "dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily." I also realized the presence of attending angels, who whispered, "Sister spirit, come away!" But God in Christ, and the love of God manifested in him, were the all-absorbing objects

of my enraptured soul's devotion, and for a season excluded every other thought. Soon, however, Jesus revealed to my astonished soul a series of spiritual wonders, or shall I say, a *vision of spiritual realities*, which no human language can describe, but which taught me volumes of divine truth, the savour of which has ever since remained with my spirit. These views of the world of spirits I have elsewhere made a feeble attempt to describe in the language of sense; but as they do not immediately bear upon the doctrine of the Trinity, I shall not insert them here. I will only state that I was directed to behold the balancing between *sin and holiness*—a great gulf was between the two. Sin, hideous sin, appeared before me in its true colours. I beheld it abstractedly, apart from any concern that I had in it, and shrank away from it as the abominable thing which God hates. I was assured that I was delivered from its deadly curse, yet beheld the indescribable and accursed thing called sin, with feelings of utter detestation and horror.

I dreaded living longer on earth, lest I should again fall under the influence of sin, and thus grieve that Holiness which was at the same time exhibited to my view in such bright and lovely characters : therefore, death in any form appeared at that moment preferable to living in this world, for *in the earth sin held dominion*.

Then I was directed to behold the comparison between time and eternity. I saw earth's highest joys but as the small dust of the balance, and the brightest honours which this world can bestow, but as a glittering tinsel toy ; while, on the other hand, eternity arose to view with refulgent brightness and weighty glory. These spiritual realities, and wonders which I may not here name, I beheld in and by the light of eternity. These views were such as no mortal could conceive, unaided by the Spirit of God ; and that the Spirit of God did open my *spiritual eyes* to behold at that time wonderful things of a spiritual nature, I can no more doubt, than that I am now living and penning

these lines. But to describe what I saw with my spirit is impossible : for, as St. Paul says, "I heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." II. Cor., xii., 4. Surely it was a beatific vision—nature nearly expired under the view, and my spirit panted and struggled to escape from its clayey cage, eager to join the happy spirits above.

O how fully did I realize, in that hour, the distinction between soul and body. I had advanced to the very verge of eternity ; I was already basking in the blaze of God's presence, and only waiting for the fleeting breath to release my soul. This world seemed too confined, *too small*, to contain my immortal spirit, and I distinctly felt the fluttering of my soul against its prison wall, while it in vain struggled to escape from the body, which, to all appearance, was in the immediate grasp of death.

A friend now living, who was standing by my bedside, asked, "Do you feel no uneasiness at the thought of dying and leaving your children ?" I replied, "I feel no anxiety

concerning them ; I leave them to my God ; he assures me they are safe in his keeping ; he will be their God and Father—I know it.”

The friend who asked this question was *then* a Unitarian, and she, together with the nurse, my parents, sister and brother, and another youthful friend, stood around my bed, and were the witnesses of that memorable scene. And O the Spirit gave me utterance, for while my soul was rapt in adoring praise, my lips were taught in some degree to speak of the glories presented, not to the bodily organs of sight, but to the eye of the soul. The love of God in Christ, and salvation through him, was the dearest theme. I cried, If any thing could make me willing to tarry on earth till morning, it is that I may tell Dr. —— that Jesus Christ is God, and God is love. If he were here, surely I could convince him of this delightful truth. Yet I never once remembered that the friend at my bedside was also a Unitarian, therefore I said nothing to her ; but to this beloved friend God’s Spirit applied the

words I uttered, and convinced her of the divinity of Christ. And strange to tell, when my physician came the next morning, I was not permitted to say one word to him of all I wished to tell him in the night, but felt as if a seal was placed upon my lips, that I might not speak to him. This grieved me, for he was *the individual* whose arguments in favour of Socinianism used to distress me so much. Nor did I ever after speak with him on that subject, to the day that he died—a Socinian still.

But to return from this digression. Jesus had now drawn nigh to my eye of faith, in a manifestation of his glory in distinct personality, and the manifestation exceeded any conception of the person of Christ that I had ever formed, assisted by the account of the transfiguration, Matt. xvii., 2. And this manifestation silenced for ever the temptation to question the Deity of Christ, for faith now distinctly realized that “in Christ dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” I now worshipped God, “sitting at the feet of

Jesus ;” and during the next twenty-one months, a similar manifestation of the person of Christ was repeated *twice*—each time unexpectedly, while I was praying, and with a suddenness that filled me with amazement, and overwhelmed my soul with tumultuous joy, so that my body trembled and grew faint : God seemed each time to bless me more than I had asked. Indeed, I realized as fully the spiritual presence of Christ, as though I had beheld him in the body ; and being completely lost for the time to every object of sense, I prayed to him, wept before him, and communed with him in spirit, receiving from him assurances of love and mercy. And all this passed with as much reality and vividness as if Christ had actually then come down to earth, so that my bodily senses could realize his presence. Yet, understand me, my friend, *I saw him not with the eyes of my body*, heard him not with my ears, nor touched him with my hands. No ; it was the powers of my soul that recognized his *spiritual presence* and held commu-

nion with him. But invariably, after these two manifestations, and succeeding ones for several years were withdrawn, I was assailed by the most horrible temptations to *unbelief* by the powers of darkness. Blessed be God! each conflict ended in my gaining the victory, and my faith was greatly strengthened in the warfare.

I supposed that I had now received as full a manifestation of Deity as I could receive while in the body. But I wanted always thus to behold Jesus. I could not endure the absence of my beloved Lord and Saviour; and I hungered and thirsted so intensely after the manifestations of his love, grace and presence, that I longed for death, that I might go and be “for ever with the Lord.” This was selfishness—I was resting too much on *frames* and *feelings*; but I was not then aware that I was impatient to reap the harvest before it was ripe.

About five days after I had received the manifestation of the person of Christ the third time, I was blessed with another new and

peculiar manifestation of Deity. I was taken sick with symptoms of Asiatic cholera, then raging in the city all around me; and though I had been much in attendance upon the dead and dying, I had never felt the slightest apprehension of taking the disease myself. Indeed, during the many weeks that this dreadful pestilence continued to crowd its victims to the grave, my soul was kept in perfect peace, and serene as an autumnal sky. On awakening from sleep one morning, I discovered the symptoms of the disease in my body, and immediately arose to call for assistance from the family. Collapse cramps had already seized my extremities, and as I was returning to my bed I remembered how many victims I had known, who arose with the sun in health, and were committed to the grave before he had set below the western horizon, and I thought, Perhaps before night I too shall be numbered with the dead, and my spirit at rest in the bosom of its God. The thought was rapture, and I fell upon my knees, exclaiming, Come, Lord

Jesus, come quickly, and take me to thine arms in glory! Instantly a glorious light burst upon my soul—heaven seemed to open before me, and a Glory unutterable and indescribable descended towards me, as if let down to earth. My soul struggled to escape from the body and leap into the bosom of its God, nor would I have tarried a moment, to say farewell to parent or child. But my panting soul struggled in vain to escape from its clayey tenement. O how the presence of God filled the room, and my soul, rapt in adoration and the cloud of Glory, exclaimed, “This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!” Gen. xxviii., 17. Then I was speechless, and remained in adoring silence. While thus engaged, Jehovah spoke to my soul in a voice that *did not reach the outward ear*, yet caused every nerve in my body to tremble with awe, reverence and love, saying, “Not yet—you shall not die by cholera at this time; because God has a purpose respecting you which is yet future, and your life is bound up in the per-

formance of that purpose." I was utterly confounded—disappointment almost made me weep ; yet I was not alarmed—no, it was

“ The sacred awe that dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love.”

I felt myself to be in the presence of the Essence of Deity, but could give no definite idea of what it was : for there was no manifestation of either *person* of the Trinity, but a Glory which was overwhelming, and which I could neither comprehend or describe. This manifestation lasted perhaps a half hour, and then was withdrawn ; but for the remainder of that day, I continued alternately either in silent amazement, or so filled with praise to God, that, unable to contain its own emotions, my soul burst out in involuntary exclamations of adoring worship. Indeed, the glory of God manifested to my soul on that occasion was so refulgent, that even now I can scarcely persuade myself that the room was not filled *visibly* with the cloud of glory. I continued sick for several days, and though

those around me were anxious as to the result, I was fully persuaded that I should not die of the disease, for God had said so.

Again, seven days after, while praying, I received a very vivid manifestation of Christ, and while engaged in prayer to him, I found myself suddenly presented in spirit to the presence of the Father, and *seemingly* kneeling at his feet on a rock scarcely large enough to hold my person: this, I was given to understand, was the Rock of Ages. This manifestation of the spiritual Rock appeared suspended in open space, and yet it was *immovable*, because it was supported by *the power of God*, who was manifested upon it in the office and person of the Father, while Jesus, in the office of the Mediator, stood close at his right hand, presenting and sweetly pleading his wounds and righteousness in my behalf. While I knelt *in spirit* upon that spiritual rock at the Father's feet, the Almighty seemed to throw his arm around and underneath my soul, forming a *sure support and preservation*,

and thus it was intimated to my mind: "Behold the perfect security of God's children, who ought to *rest simply* on him, their *Rock* and *Salvation*." I was drawn, as it were, into the arms of my God, while he encouraged my soul to lean upon him, and tell him all my wants and sorrows. O how fully I realized, at that moment, that "God is love." I was filled with holy love and childlike confidence—indeed I knew no fear, for "Perfect love had cast out fear." I. John, iv., 18. My feelings during this manifestation were different from what they had been under the former manifestation, for then I beheld in spirit an incomprehensible glory; but now there was no overwhelming glory, God appeared in his attribute of *love*. Then I was filled with an ecstasy of mingled awe, fear and love, and adored in silence; but now, though I trembled with joy, I knew no fear, and calmly communed with my Father, God, respecting my wants. I approached the Father through Christ, and enjoyed fellowship and communion with him. O how sweetly did I cast

my soul into the Father's arms, to be entirely given up to the guidance of his Spirit.

This strange and wonderful vision was, I suppose, only a presentation of spiritual imagery to my mind, in order to convey certain truths to my understanding which it was designed to teach. I did not suppose that I beheld a *natural rock* suspended in the air, or that I kneeled upon that rock *in the body*; but I understood at the time that it was altogether of a spiritual nature, and emblematical of Scripture truth. For the nature of faith and the utter dependence of the soul upon God for all it needs and receives, was thus most forcibly illustrated. Yet so vivid and real was the transaction between God and my soul, and so vital was the perception of faith, that I could not then decide, and know not now, whether this spiritual imagery was presented to my soul in the body, or whether my soul was caught up out of the body for a short season—God only knows how it was. But I rather suppose that my soul was in an ecstasy, for it is certain that my

outward senses were locked up for the time, so that I had no use of them, and I could scarcely tell where I was for a few moments after the manifestation was withdrawn, though I was in my own room, and it was at mid-day. One thing, however, I was assured of, namely, That it was *in* and *by* and *through Christ*, I had now found access to the Father. For this manifestation presented to my understanding both the Father and the Son in distinct personality, each acting in his proper office, yet with the fullest conviction that they were, in essence, one incomprehensible God—a glorious mystery. My communion was with the Father, to whom I was presented by Christ, who, as “God manifest in the flesh,” was also present, and silently interceding for me. Jesus I beheld with the eye of faith, in human form, as before manifested; and while I cannot say that the Father was manifested in bodily form, it was as the “Ancient of days.” Dan. vii., 9. And the relation between Father and child was so forcibly impressed upon my

mind, that faith recognized and received him as a Parent. He manifested himself in person as my "Father in heaven," and my spiritual perception received him as such. My soul interchanged all the fearless and confiding love of a child for the affectionate and protecting kindness of a father, while he assured me that his arm of love around and underneath my soul was the *only preservative* against my falling.

Surely it had never before entered into my mind to conceive of such a manifestation of grace, and having received it, I thought: This, then, is a full manifestation of the Trinity, for I now know both the Father and the Son, and it was the Spirit who revealed them unto me. For although I worshipped the Holy Spirit, and often addressed petitions to him in prayer, as part of the Godhead, yet I never had, up to that time, nor for fifteen months after, any conception of the *individuality* of the Holy Spirit, but always regarded the Spirit as a mysterious influence, proceeding from the Father and the Son.

CHAPTER II.

UP to this time, I had never lisp'd to living mortal any thing concerning these wonderful dealings of God with my soul in secret. With the exception of my sick-bed experience, to which there were six witnesses, I had kept all these things to myself, and pondered them in my heart. But now I could no longer refrain from telling others of the great things God was doing for my soul ; but I was injudicious in my selections of Christian confidants, and for the first time I learned that all Christians have not faith alike. With one single exception, out of a little circle of twelve, my testimony was rejected as imaginary and fanatical. Insinuations were thrown out behind my back, that my mind was becoming disordered ; and before my face, ominous looks were exchanged by these luke-

warm professors of religion, while they gravely warned me to "Beware of enthusiasm." I was now brought to a stand, and exclaimed, Can this be the work of imagination? Is it possible that I am under a delusion? Alarmed, I fled to the word of God as a test, and applying this touchstone, I could discover nothing unscriptural in my experience; but, on the contrary, was convinced that I had been enlightened in the knowledge of Scripture doctrines by these very manifestations, which had been condemned as imaginative.

Yet a door of temptation had now been opened, and after six weeks of the highest spiritual enjoyment, during which I had received the last named manifestations, I fell into a conflict with unbelief and temptation, which I even now shudder to think of. Satanic suggestions were poured into my mind like a flood: I was *tempted* to deny the work of the Holy Spirit, and to pronounce it the work of the devil, and this with such vehemence, that for three days and nights I neither eat or slept, but continued on my knees,

or prostrate on the floor, in torture of soul. I was unable to close the Bible which I held in my hand, or to utter a single petition in prayer, or reply to the tempter, except in the very language of Scripture. For the instant I closed the book, that instant Satan gained the advantage, and it was only by returning to meet his suggestions with "Thus saith the Lord," that I could preserve my soul from desperation, or my intellect from utter confusion. During this conflict "a horror of darkness" was again upon my spirit, and not one single ray from the "Sun of Righteousness" pierced through the cloud, to cheer my agonized soul. But I had a consciousness that Jesus stood at my side, with his face turned away from me, as if in displeasure; yet he held me with a *grasp* which all the efforts of the tempter could not loosen, and *in this* all my safety lay. Thus Christ staid by me as my salvation, but left me to fight out the struggle with "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Eph. vi., 17.

At length Christ turned and rebuked the

adversary, and then he was forced to withdraw and leave me ; but I was left almost fainting from suffering—physically weak and under great spiritual depression. Did you ever read Bunyan's description of Apollyon's fight with Christian? That seems tame, compared with what I endured. But, like Christian in the allegory, I came off at last more than conqueror, through Christ helping me. Gradually I recovered composure and strength, and during the next fifteen months, I enjoyed many devotional seasons, in which I found access to the Father, as well as to the Son, and I was brought more and more into the sweet "Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father." Rom. viii., 15. At the expiration of this time I was again surprised with another and still more wonderful manifestation of Deity. On a day consecrated annually to secret devotional exercises, I commenced prayer by addressing God as my Father, and in so doing the first person in the Holy Trinity was instantly manifested to my soul—I saw in faith the way opened, "even

to his throne." Job xxiii., 3. Next I addressed the Son, as "God manifest in the flesh," and immediately I was made to realize vividly his presence, manifested as the second person in the Trinity, and my soul rejoiced in faith and hope. Then I prayed to the Spirit, as I had often done before, and, blessed be God ! he instantly revealed himself to my soul in a Stream of Glory, when, wondering and astonished, my adoring soul was made to comprehend, for the first time, the *distinct personality* of the Holy Ghost. I felt and perceived his rays of light unutterable penetrating my soul, and then, O wonderful ! the whole *Trinity in Unity* was manifested to me : the Father and the Son were presented on either side, while the Holy Ghost shined forth from the centre of the mercy-seat, and overshadowed me with his rays of glory. The manifestation lasted the whole time I continued in prayer, and I was on this occasion drawn to look principally to the Holy Spirit, realizing that he was in the Godhead directly over me, to indite and listen to my

petitions offered through Christ. And I was assured that I had now been brought into fellowship with the Holy Ghost, and should, from this time forth, hold more intimate communion with the third person of the Holy Trinity, which has since been most signally fulfilled in my blest experience. This manifestation of the Holy Spirit was attended with such convincing power to my soul, and so sealed my faith, that I have never since felt a solitary doubt of the divinity of all the manifestations, nor of the validity of my own experience. The power of Satan to annoy, with suggestions that I *might be mistaken*, was now broken; nor could the singularity of my experience be now brought to bear upon my soul, as an argument against its genuine character: for the Spirit himself witnessed with my spirit, (Rom. viii., 16,) and God had now granted me, “according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.” Eph. iii., 16. Consequently, from this time forth, I had no more conflicts with temptation

and unbelief on this point, being “rooted and grounded in faith and love, according to the power that worketh in us.” 17, 20 vs.

I had now, within *three years*, to a day, (from the time of my remarkable sick-bed experience, already related,) been brought into an acquaintance with, and experimental knowledge of, each person in the Godhead: first the Son, then the Father, and thirdly, the Holy Spirit—then of the whole Trinity in Unity, with a distinct apprehension of *the three existing in one*. And here let me remark with reverence, that in discoursing thus freely of the glorious Trinity, I do not pretend to know or explain, in any degree, the mystery of the Godhead; of the essential nature of the Godhead I understand nothing. The knowledge I have attained of Deity is not a comprehension of his essence—no, that is as great and adorable a mystery now as it ever was; but it is an apprehension or understanding of his existence, as manifested to me by himself, in his persons and offices. And a knowledge of the econo-

my of his grace, as manifested in the plan of redemption, and work of the holy Trinity, revealed to me as my Father, Saviour and Comforter. And I believe that it is only through these persons and offices, that living men can arrive at any comprehensive knowledge of God. I am assured of this, both from the holy Scriptures and from experience. I once received a manifestation of Deity, as the essence of truth, light and glory ; but it was a manifestation which filled me with awe and fear, and left me in *distance*. I was reminded by it that “God, out of Christ, is a consuming fire.” Heb., 12 ch. And I was forcibly taught by it the exceeding value of the plan of salvation—the mercy, love and condescension displayed in the economy of grace ; and the blessedness of having a Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ, who, by stooping to our finite capacities, enables us to climb up to some conception of his grace. Thus it became evident to my mind, that the soul, while it is embodied in the flesh, could not approach God but through

the persons and offices of the Trinity ; and that the soul, while it tabernacles in the flesh, is only capable of receiving a sight of God's glory to a certain degree, and one single ray beyond that degree, if brought to bear upon the soul, would instantly extinguish life. How then could any living man bear an exhibition of the Essence of Deity ? Has not God himself declared, " There shall no man see me and live." Ex. xxxiii., 20. What gratitude then should we feel to God for clothing himself with flesh ; for veiling his Godhead in the flesh, (Heb. x., 20,) and coming to us as the man, Christ Jesus : for who can dwell on earth and comprehend God out of Christ ? Not one, of all the fallen sons and daughters of Adam. But in and through Christ, the Anointed of God, we are privileged and enabled, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, to approach and enter within the vail," (Heb. vi., 19,) and worship God in spirit and truth, as our reconciled Father. O the wonders of redeeming grace ! the very angels desire to look into them.

Years have elapsed since I first received the manifestation of the distinct personality of the Holy Ghost, and of the Trinity in unity. And with that glorious manifestation came the command: "Arise, shine—for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Is. lx., 1. And, as I have said before, it was attended with such powerful assurance of the divine nature of those manifestations, and of the genuineness of my own experience, as strictly according with the truths and instructions of Scripture, that, from that hour, every doubt was silenced, and my feet planted on the rock of assurance. And though I have since endured much conflict with unbelief and temptation on other points, yet on this I have remained invulnerable to this hour. Nor do I recollect that distance and fear have in any instance attended the manifestations of Deity, since I have been brought into the knowledge of, and communion with, the Holy Spirit in his own proper office. And each revolving year has brought with it a succession of

glorious manifestations of the persons and attributes of Deity, richly laden with instruction to my soul. I have found my fellowship and communion with Father, Son and Spirit continually increasing and heightening, with a growing knowledge of the economy of grace. The fruit of these manifestations has been a rapid increase in spiritual knowledge and holiness—they have enlightened my understanding, been attended with a *subduing power over my will*, and a sanctifying influence over my affections. And now I bless God that he permitted my faith to be so severely tried for a season: for though the powers of darkness used sometimes to assail me furiously for a while, and I was compelled to endure blasphemous thoughts, which wrung my soul with agony, till occasionally my conflicts grew so severe that physical strength forsook me, and my body fainted under the anguish of my mind. Yet those horrible temptations were even then working out future comfort for me: because, through God's help, faith triumphed, and became stronger

after every blast of temptation, till finally it pleased God to deliver me permanently from the tempter's power on this subject, by establishing my faith: thus, "Out of the eater, came forth meat."

I have remarked that the manifestations of the persons of the Trinity are thus characterized to my soul. When Jesus, the second person in the Godhead, manifests his presence to my soul, I feel a nearness of friendship, a fellowship in sympathy and sentiment, if I may with reverence so express myself—a fond clinging to him, who, though God himself, yet condescended to veil his Godhead in the flesh, and to sympathize with us in all the cares, infirmities, pains and sorrows of human nature. He who united in one person both the divine and human natures; and thus, by taking my nature into union with his own, communicates to my soul a measure of his divine nature, through his communicable perfections, thus gradually transforming my soul into his own blessed image. "For

whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." Rom. viii., 29. "But we all, with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." II. Cor. iii., 18. O I can take a hold on Jesus by faith, and say, This is my brother and friend, as well as my Saviour and God!

When the Father or first person of the Trinity manifests his presence to me, I am instantly sensible of the feelings of a *little child*. I know no fear; but submission, reverence, and sweet confiding love fill my soul. I sink, as it were, into the extended arms of Deity, exclaiming, It is my Father—my delight is to do his will! O how inadequate to describe the feelings of the soul towards her Father God, under such views, are the most devoted filial affections among men, though they are of a similar nature.

But when the Holy Spirit, the third person

in the Trinity, is manifested to my soul, the view which my spirit receives is so peculiar that I scarcely know how to describe it. It is a Glory, from which a stream of Light is emanated in an infinitude of rays. He is the essence of Light purely ethereal. He imparts Light, discerning, purifying and sanctifying. Under those rays I cry, "With thee is the fountain of life : in thy light shall we see light." Ps. xxxvi., 9. My spirit, in adoration, looks upward ; is hushed into silence ; feels calm, serene, reverential ; is in the posture of waiting expectation, while heaven is actually reflected down into my soul.

Through realizing faith, which is "the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. xi., 1) with the eyes of the body, I can take a comprehensive hold on Jesus, and feel a nearness to him. So, also, I can approach my Father God in spirit—kneel at his feet, as it were ; I can rest upon him, and feel my soul drawn within the everlasting arms of his divine love. But the manifestation of the Holy Spirit is revealed from the heaven of hea-

vens, comes from afar off. He baptizes my soul with emanations from himself, which only reach me in reflected rays, and it is "an unction from the Holy One." I. John, ii., 20. But, as yet, I have never been admitted to *such nearness of access* to the Spirit, as to the Father and the Son, though my communion with the Spirit grows and increases too. For a long time, I supposed that I could not approach nearer than I did to the Essence of Light, and yet live ; but even in this I find a growth in grace. For, whereas I first beheld in faith the rays of the Holy Spirit descending upon me from afar, I have since realized the nearer approach of those rays to my soul. And I have received an *oft repeated* manifestation of the Holy Ghost, as surrounding and enclosing my soul with beams of glory, as "secretly in a pavilion." Ps. xxxi., 20. And even more than this, which I almost fear to tell, I have received a manifestation in vision, of my soul passing through Christ, "the Door," (John x., 9,) and "the Way" of access, (John xiv., 6,) straight into

the Father's bosom, and held there by the everlasting arms; while the Holy Spirit, as a Cloud of Glory, enveloped the eternal throne of the everlasting Father, and clothed my poor soul with teaching light: and O! for a seraph's tongue, to tell the depth of instruction given.

Yet still the conviction is, that the person and offices of Christ are the most easily comprehended by the soul, and that the apprehension of the Holy Spirit, as a person of the Godhead, is the most difficult for the understanding to grasp. But this I know and testify, that to receive such an unction from the Holy Ghost—even to have a portion of those reflected rays reaching the soul from afar off, if a full, soul-satisfying portion, under which I have exclaimed, It is enough, Lord: withdraw now thy glory, for the body faints!

O my soul, if thy discoveries and enjoyments have been so great while yet on earth, what must the future rewards of faith be! What must it be to “dwell in the light which

no man can approach unto: which no man hath seen or can see." I. Tim., vi., 16.

In the manifestations of the persons of the Trinity to my soul, there has never been any special order observed. Sometimes the Father alone is manifested, sometimes the Son alone, and frequently the Father and Son; but I think that I have never received a manifestation of the Holy Ghost without an apprehension of the presence of the Father and Son also, though not always with equal clearness and vividness. Often in devotion the three persons in the Godhead are manifested to my soul, as existing together in mystical union; I have a distinct realizing apprehension of Father, Son and Spirit, each acting in his distinct office; can hold communion separately with each, and adore the Three in One, with the fullest conviction that, "great is the mystery of godliness." I. Tim., iii., 16. Utterly incomprehensible to any finite mind, yet a mystery which I love to contemplate and adore. Indeed, the manifestation of the Trinity fills the soul too full

for utterance, absorbs every faculty in awe, adoration and love, which leaves no room for doubt or speculation concerning that glorious mystery, which infinitely exists beyond its comprehension. Thus the very sublimity of the manifestation lays the soul prostrate in humility, and preserves the soul from trifling in the presence of its God.

The knowledge which my soul has attained of the persons in the Godhead is not comprehensive, but apprehensive. We may distinctly apprehend or conceive of those things which we yet have no comprehensive knowledge of: for instance, when our eyes behold the sun, we apprehend or conceive of the fact in our minds, that it is located or placed in the heavens above us, and shines upon the earth, producing certain effects. Just so my soul apprehends the existence and presence, or manifestation to my understanding, of the Trinity, both in unity and personality; while I believe that God alone can comprehensively understand his own existence and perfections.

But when we come to speak of the *instruction* which such manifestations are intended to convey to the understanding of the soul, then we may say that we *comprehend* the truths taught through and by that which is in itself incomprehensible to finite minds. Then I say that I have received, through those peculiar manifestations of the Trinity made to my soul, an *apprehensive knowledge* of the existence of the one God in three persons, with whom I have been permitted to commune in spirit, and hold fellowship with, in a certain sense. And secondly, a *comprehensive knowledge*, to a certain degree, of their several offices and work in the soul, as developed in the plan of salvation, and in the economy of grace. And the views which I have enjoyed of the manifestations of the Trinity have been through the medium of *faith*, which is *the eye of the soul*, and, in the language of Scripture, “the evidence of things not seen” (Heb. xi., 1,) with the natural organ of sight. This differs in degree from the direct, intuitive, and immediate vi-

sion of God, which holy disembodied spirits are capable of receiving, and do enjoy, as much as the light of a candle differs from the bright shining light of the sun. But though differing in degree, it is the same in kind, for in both instances, it is a soul-strengthening and comforting, as well as a transforming light.

That I have received *real manifestations* of the Godhead in distinct personality, as Father, Son and Spirit, revealed to my faith, to the eye of my soul, is certain, and that I do, in a small measure, realize their existence, as manifested in heaven:—the Father as the Father, or “Ancient of days;” the Son in glorified human form; and the Holy Spirit, as Light and Glory; also their several offices of love, mercy and consolation, all united in one incomprehensible Godhead, I can no more doubt than that I live and breathe. And I expect, when I die, to see God in essence, “face to face,” with open vision, as I now see through the medium of faith, only that the view in glory will infinitely tran-

scend that on earth, in clearness, comfort and instruction.

But observe, in those spiritual manifestations which illustrate the *attributes* of Deity, and *shadow forth the economy of grace* in the work of man's redemption, by spiritual imagery, such as a rock, door, pillars, etc., I distinctly understand these to be but metaphorical representations of spiritual truths, which exist as axioms that disembodied spirits never doubt; but which the human soul, enclosed as it is in a material body, is incapable of conceiving so full a conviction of, as when shadowed forth in imagery proportioned to our senses. Some old writer remarks that, "The pure and supreme light never descends to us without a garment or covering." Behold, then, the goodness of God, in accommodating his truth to our capacity; and let not unbelief attribute such views to an excited or diseased imagination, forgetful that God has, in former ages, employed such spiritual imagery in Scripture visions, and that inspired writers were instructed by and

through such imagery, to convey certain truths to the knowledge of man. And let it be remembered also, that the perception of faith is as distinct, in itself, from the spiritual imagery employed in teaching truth, as those truths are, in essence, from the metaphors which shadow them forth to the mind of man.

Some will say, Though the Lord did employ such spiritual imagery in former ages, we are not to look for instruction through such imagery now, that the canon of Scripture is closed, but must look for it in the Bible, the written word of God. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Is. viii., 20. This was the advice of the inspired prophet, Isaiah, and I humbly repeat it to all who doubt and cavil: simply take this experience and these manifestations "to the law and to the testimony," try them by the touchstone of God's written word, contained in the Holy Bible, and, "if they speak not according to this word, it is

because there is no truth in them," and you may reject them as spurious and weak. But if you find, after a careful investigation of the Scriptures of truth, that they strictly accord with the doctrines, precepts and instructions of God's word, beware how you reject, as visionary and singular, as foolish and vain, what God has seen fit to illustrate to another's mind by such remarkable manifestations, and with such wonderful condescension and mercy. Remember that there were some of whom the Apostle Paul wrote thus: "But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you." II. Cor. x., 12, 13.

Who will presume to deny that the operations of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and understandings of individual Christians, at the present day, are as much diversified as were his operations in the miraculous gifts

of that age of the church? Let Christians, then, beware of limiting the operations of God's Spirit to those methods and degrees which come within the narrow sphere of their own observation, lest they incur the reproach which Paul addressed to the Corinthians, x. chap., 2 Epistle.

CHAPTER III.

THE following are some of the sanctified results which my soul has reaped from those manifestations of the persons and offices of the Trinity, and of the attributes of Jehovah. Although a "way of access," through the person of Christ, has been opened for my soul to commune with the Father and Spirit, yet my communion is most frequently with the Son. And if I have a consciousness of having fallen into any special sin, then it is always Jesus who first reveals his comforting presence to my soul, and having received a consciousness of forgiveness from him, I am then led to expect and do receive again the manifestation of the Father and Spirit. I have remarked also, in my daily experience, that so surely as a little cross awaits me, so surely do I receive peculiar comfort in devo-

tion, generally through the person of Christ, a few hours before the trial overtakes me. And if I am about to meet with a heavy, overwhelming trial or affliction, to which I am no stranger, I am just as sure to receive beforehand a manifestation of the whole Trinity, which fills my soul so full of the joyful assurance of God's love, and gives such an earnest of the "inheritance of the saints in light," that I am raised above the evils of this life; and "as my day is, so is my strength," according to the promise of God. Deut. xxxiii., 25. "The God of Israel is he that gives strength and power unto his people." Ps. lxviii., 35.

Having been called, in the providence of God, to endure severe and protracted bodily sufferings for a course of years, I have observed that after being relieved for awhile from acute pain, the increase of that pain was ever the signal for the nearer approach of Jesus. I instantly had a realizing apprehension of his comforting presence; and so long as I endured that physical suffering, I

felt the manifested presence of the God-man at my side, and ever so near that, to use the language of sense, I could put out the hand of faith and touch him. Or when relieved from severe pain, if I missed his comforting presence, directly I cried after my Saviour, and he answered, saying, "Here I am," fulfilling literally to me, in my experience, that promise: "Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am." Is. lviii., 9.

Again: In performing the work of self-examination, I find the greatest assistance from these distinct views of the persons and offices of the Trinity. I have thus been taught the relations which exist between the soul and its Father-God, whose office it is to subdue the will and govern it. The will sits at the helm of the human soul, in its unrenewed state, and exercises a sovereign control over its affections and actions. But in the regenerated soul this faculty returns to its allegiance to Deity, and though its obedience is but too often defective, yet in the

general, it yields obedience to the persuasive and transforming influence of the Holy Spirit, who, in the economy of grace, is the appointed agent by whom all the transactions of the soul with its God are effected, and whose prerogative it is to enlighten the understanding, which acts as the counsellor and guide to the will.

While Jesus, the eternal Son of God, takes a special cognizance of the heart, searches out its corruptions, and sets them in order before the eye of the mind. Thus Christ, working by the influences of the Spirit, convinces the soul effectually of the innate depravity of its affections and passions, and leads it to trust in his merit alone for salvation. While captivated with the excellency and glory of his perfections, the soul aims with a holy ambition after conformity to him as its example, and receives him as its Prophet, Priest and King. And thus, through the aid and blessing of God, I am enabled to know myself, my sins, wants, failures, measure of sanctification, and to pray according

to the dictates of the Spirit for such grace as I need. In the fruits of my experience, then, I have the proof that those manifestations are divine, and transforming in their effects. And “by their fruits ye shall know them,” says Christ. Matt. vii., 20.

For a number of years after I began to receive the manifestations alluded to above, I was subject to great alternations in my spiritual frames and feelings. For though my assurance of salvation remained unshaken, and I could at all times contemplate death with a feeling of rapture, as the messenger whose office would be to usher my soul into glory, yet sin and sorrow frequently had power to depress and sadden my spirit—there was still a kind of torment in sin. For instance, if after receiving one of those manifestations, and holding this sensible communion with God, I was betrayed into trifling of any kind, or into the indulgence of a wrong temper, directly I felt as if a cloud had passed over my spiritual vision, and obscured the Sun of Righteousness from view.

I was not left in darkness, but made to feel that God was displeased, and had partially withdrawn his presence from my view. And I was obliged to seek him again with renewed actings of faith, and often with tears of repentance, before he would again reveal his precious and comforting light. Thus I was made to feel that unholy propensities and the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit are incompatible—the one must and will quench the other—so that I often exclaimed with sorrow, Alas ! how easily is the Spirit of God grieved into withdrawing his comforting influences from my soul ! And what a proof is this, that my joy in devotion comes from no fictitious source, but is verily the fruit of that Spirit whose essence is holiness, and who will hold no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather re-proves them : “For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth, proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful

works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Eph. v., 9-11.

This stage of my Christian experience required a great and constant effort to keep up intimate communion with God. I then seemed like one called to take the kingdom of heaven by storm. (Matt. xi., 12.) And many were the whole days and nights, and often whole weeks at a time, which my struggling soul spent in unceasing wrestlings with God in prayer, for a deeper work of grace in my heart, and for strength to endure the complicated sorrows and trials which met me at every step in life, and under which I must have fainted, but for the mighty consolations dealt out to my soul, through the wonderful manifestations recorded above. Nor let it be supposed that I led a hermit's life. Far from it: I mingled extensively in the social circles of life, and engaged in many active Christian duties, abroad as well as at home. My hands and head were always full of work, and my heart full of tem-

poral trials ; while not unfrequently severe physical sufferings were also laid upon me : for so it seemed good unto my heavenly Father that it should be, and there was no lack of “ thorns in the flesh ” (II. Cor., xii., 7-10,) to keep me humble. And I learned to *breathe in prayer*. I do not exaggerate when I say this, for prayer became as essential to my soul, as meat and drink were to sustain the body ; and often when moving in the busy crowd, or sitting in the social circle of the parlour, my spirit was ascending to its God in fervent ejaculatory prayer, till I learned, as it were, to breathe in prayer. And when I could, without neglecting other duties, retire to my own private apartment, I ever found it a “ little sanctuary,” in which the presence of the Lord abode ; and the bed of sickness was always sure to be turned into a “ Bethel,” from which I invariably arose strengthened in grace and faith to meet coming conflicts, which always ended in my gaining the victory through grace. Nor would I omit to mention that I was in the habit of

studying the *whole Scriptures*, from Genesis to Revelation, with prayer, frequently on my knees ; and always, as I opened the Bible to read, my spirit sent upwards an ejaculatory prayer to God, for the teaching light of the Spirit to accompany the reading of the word.

The stage of Christian experience described above continued about three or four years ; when at length I received a manifestation of the coming of Christ to take up his *abode permanently in the temple of my soul*, and thus to bring my spirit into an *abiding* and intimate union with himself. Since which time, I have never lost the consciousness of his presence in my soul, and have been at all times able to hold intimate communion with Christ, by simply turning my eye of faith upon the inward manifestation of his presence. And this has introduced my soul into a passive stage of Christian experience. I now no longer felt the need of such protracted supplication in general, for all my desires and petitions were quickly summed up in the laconic, but comprehensive petitions : “ Thy kingdom

come ! Thy will be done !” And instead of talking so much to God in prayer, I now passively listen to the whispers of his Spirit, and adoringly worship him by contemplating his perfections in silence. Sometimes, under particular circumstances and changes in life, I feel myself drawn out in protracted supplication for special direction in duty, and for guidance in the right way. Also occasionally for others, both as to their temporal and spiritual concerns ; but in general, silent contemplative adoration is the peculiar characteristic of my religious worship.

And though I feel the workings of sin in my heart, and it sometimes struggles for the mastery with a high hand, it has now no power to sting and torment my soul as formerly. Nor does my God now reprove my sins with a frown ; no, divine love is made the correcting power. My repentance is not now attended with bitterness or fear, but consists in a feeling of the deepest *shame* and self-abasement, a *loathing of sin*, and a clinging to Christ with renewed dedication of body,

soul and spirit to the Lord, crying, "Lord, I am thine; save me!" While Jesus, my Saviour, smiles upon me, saying, "Behold how I love thee, notwithstanding all thy unworthiness!" O what a blessed state of liberty this is! The Apostle John describes my state in these words: "God is love: and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." I. John, iv., 16.

How trifling and vain do earthly pleasures appear, in comparison with those joys which spring from communion and fellowship with Deity! How subduing and transforming is the contemplation of the holiness, love, goodness, power and wisdom of God! How delightful to meditate on the perfections of God in Christ, to enter by faith within the vail, and to receive there the irradiating beams from the eternal Fountain of Light.

To such communion with God Christians may be admitted, if they will but seek after it; but to maintain this communion unceasing watchfulness and momentary actings of faith are requisite. How important, then,

the admonition of our blessed Saviour: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Matt. xxvi., 41.

The latter day glory is not only dawning now upon the heathen world, but upon the souls of Christians also—the morning is steadily and speedily advancing towards the perfect day: "Arise," then, O Church of Christ, and "shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Is. lx., 1. God is at the present day diffusing into the souls of some of his children more full and brilliant illuminations from the Eternal Source of spiritual light. While in the minds of many others there appears to be a waking up to the importance of having more just and definite conceptions of the Trinity, especially of the personality of the Holy Spirit—a hungering and thirsting after deeper experiences of God's love, and more glorious and distinct manifestations of his presence in their souls. This I have observed

in private conversations with Christians, and occasionally I have heard it urged from the pulpit. O that Christians generally would realize their exalted privileges, and press on to the attainment of higher views of grace and truth than they are too often satisfied with. Remember that Christ said, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth : for he shall not speak of himself ; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak : and he shall show you things to come. He shall glorify me ; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine : therefore said I that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." John xvi., 12-15. This blessed Spirit, the Comforter, is come, and it is under his dispensation that we live ; and through his ministration we are taught the meaning of many things which the apostles themselves did not comprehend clearly, until they were miraculously endued with the Holy

Spirit. Let us, ~~therefore~~, look unto him, wait upon him, and expect to receive according to the promise of Christ. "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." John xvi., 24.

Christ also said to his sorrowful disciples: "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." John xvi., 7-11. Here Jesus speaks distinctly, not only of the offices of the Holy Spirit as the "Comforter" and Teacher, but also teaches the distinct personality of the Spirit, the Father, and himself. For, said he, when *I go*, I will send *him*, the Comforter, to teach you, that he may show you of the things of

the Father and of the Son : thus distinctly teaching that three persons exist in one God. While at the same time he asserts his *equality* with the Father and the Spirit, in these words : “He shall glorify me : for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine, therefore said I that he,” the Spirit in person, “shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you,” in his offices. How definite is this language : it would seem that the last conversation of Christ, his dying instructions to the apostles, contained in the 14th, 15th, 16th chapters of John, are sufficient in themselves, independently of the rest of the Scripture, to establish the doctrine of the holy Trinity. And we can only account, for the frequent misapprehension of this language, in the words of our Saviour to his disciples, on their way to Emmaus : “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken ! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory ? And beginning at Mo-

ses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them *in all the Scriptures*, the things concerning himself." Luke xxiv., 25-27.

We should always read the holy Scriptures in the Spirit of a *little child*, waiting and expecting to be taught by the Spirit of truth. Remember that the written word of God is the sword of the Spirit. Eph. vi., 17. And Paul tells the Hebrews, iv. chap., 12, 13: "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to do." But remember also, that it is only in the hands or power of the Spirit, that the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," becomes thus powerful in discerning and demonstrating "the truth as it is in Jesus." Eph. iv., 21. And every soul who comes to the light

contained in the Bible, in a humble and child-like dependence upon “the Spirit of truth” for instruction, “shall be taught of the Spirit.” It may be that doubt and uncertainty may cloud the mind of such an honest inquirer after truth, for a season; that faith may be tried and sincerity tested, and “that the trial of their faith being precious, more than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” I. Peter, i., 7. But in the end of the trial, that soul shall know of the doctrine, and of the truth, with certainty: “as for God, his work is perfect.”

Unto “the Jews, who marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, *whether it be of God*, or whether I speak of myself.” John vii., 15–17. He shall know of the truth with self-evident clearness, under the teaching light of the

Spirit, for “it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.” Again, “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.” I. John, v., 10. And where do we find this record, but in the Bible? Hear what Jesus said to the Jews who persecuted him, and cavilled at his works and word: “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” John v., 39.

But while I urge the studying of the Scripture under the immediate teaching influences of the Holy Spirit, as the only way of coming to the right knowledge of the truth; and while I believe that Christians are generally at fault, in not enjoying more happiness in communion with God, because they neglect the Bible too much, and study it too little with prayer; I think I venture nothing in saying, that if Christians in general would prayerfully study the word of God, with a more

teachable spirit, they would arrive at more definite and just conceptions of the persons and offices of the Trinity, as they are clearly revealed in the Scriptures. Yet I do not consider it *essential to salvation* for Christians to receive such remarkable manifestations as I have attempted to describe. And I am well aware that it is not every child of God who has faith strong enough to receive these deep experiences, as related of another—it is strong meat, which babes cannot digest. Perhaps, also, some who far excel me in practical holiness, may not be able to receive altogether many of the peculiar manifestations with which God, in his sovereign wisdom, has seen good to favour me, simply because all do not receive the same degree of light. And though all real Christians believe in the same God, “and have all been made to drink into the same spirit,” (I. Cor., xii., 13,) yet the apostle tells us, in the same chapter: “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the

same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom ; to another, the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit ; to another, faith by the same Spirit ; to another, gifts of healing by the same Spirit ; to another, the working of miracles ; to another, prophecy ; to another, discerning of spirits ; to another, divers kinds of tongues ; to another, the interpretation of tongues ; but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." I. Cor., xii., 4-11.

These were the miraculous gifts of the Church confined to that age ; but the operations of the Holy Spirit in the souls of individuals, at the present day, are not less diversified. And though we must bow to the sovereignty of God in bestowing on one, what he withholds from another, I believe it the *duty and privilege of every Christian* to aim after the highest attainments in holiness, and he that seeketh thus, shall find. "Open

thy mouth wide—I will fill it.” Ps. lxxxi., 10. This is the command and promise of our heavenly Father. And I urge others to seek after the knowledge of God, and communion with him in the persons and offices of Father, Son and Spirit; and this I believe attainable to all, because Christ and the apostles urged it upon *all believers*. I would persuade others to it, because I know experimentally that such spiritual discoveries tend to heavenly-mindedness, by enlightening the understanding, sanctifying the imagination, and raising the affections above earth, to the more refined enjoyment of heavenly things. For while God manifests his wisdom, justice, truth, love, mercy and power, as displayed in the economy of grace and revealed in the plan of man’s redemption, the soul is raised into the atmosphere of heaven, and faith grows up into full assurance of hope.

The soul who has held communion with God, and enjoyed fellowship with him in the offices of Father, Son and Spirit, has realized in its own experience that there is a Trinity

of persons in the Godhead, each engaged in accomplishing the work of its salvation. And this soul possesses an evidence and witness within itself, which no outward circumstances, no arguments, no sceptical reasoning can shake. As soon might you convince the man who beholds the bright beams of the meridian sun, that there is no sun in the heavens; or that, if in existence, he does not behold it shining with refulgent rays, refreshing, gladdening and vivifying all nature. As soon might you convince men that to-morrow will not come, as to convince that soul that there is no "inheritance for the saints in light." Col. i., 12. For he knows, to a demonstration, that there is such an inheritance and that he has interest in it, not yet by actual possession, but by anticipation and foretastes that will end in full fruition. How important, then, for Christians to be established in the faith of these things, if their comfort, holiness and usefulness depend so much upon having a realizing apprehension of the triune God, and of a glorious

eternity. What high, exalted, undying joy, does such an union with Deity bring into the soul of man ! While under the teachings of God's Spirit, refined pleasures and new glories spring up all around the child of God, the scales of sense fall from his spiritual eyes, and then the economy of grace, the volume of providence, and the book of nature, all reveal a fund of knowledge, and supply a fountain of unending satisfaction to the humble believer. Nor is this all : for it is his privilege also, to look forward, by faith and hope, through the vista of eternity, with anticipations of plunging into the heights and depths of God's unchangeable love. Ah, these are the things which even "the angels of God desire to look into !" I. Peter, i., 12. But man, fallen man—aye, some who call themselves *Christians* too—will often smile at "the enthusiasm" (as they call it) which speaks of these things, even if they do not venture to scoff and openly turn away from them with loathing, as worldlings do. "O my soul, come not thou into their secret : unto

their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united !" Gen., xlix., 6. Let this glorious salvation be thy delight : shout praise to God for the blessed triune covenant of grace : " Bless the Lord, O my soul : and all that is within me, bless his holy name !" Ps. ciii., i.

I would remark here, that those views of faith, and manifestations of the Trinity, which I have endeavoured to relate with as much simplicity as I possibly could, I firmly believe to have been taught me by the Spirit of God. For three or four years after I first began to receive those peculiar manifestations of Deity, I sought industriously for some *human testimony* to the validity of my own experience ; but I sought in vain. During the time that I was receiving the manifestation, I always had the fullest conviction of its being the work of God. But so soon as the manifestation was withdrawn, I used to be assailed with the most tormenting suggestions that it was the work

of my own imagination, or of Satan as an angel of light. And the unbelief of my heart, catching at these temptations, produced a conflict which often wrung my soul with anguish: for the manifestations were dear to me as my own soul, and I felt that I would sooner part with life than relinquish those views of faith; yet found that I could not escape from the painful trial of my faith. And when I ventured to speak of these exercises to a few professing Christians, I was met with a stare of surprise, or a warning not to allow my imagination to carry me away into enthusiasm. Thus beset on all sides, I wept and groaned over my unbelief at the feet of Jesus; I prayed with agonizing wrestlings that I might “know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” John vii., 17. And that if the work was the Holy Spirit’s, I might be confirmed in the faith of it by the testimony of some living Christian, or through some writings on the subject, other than the Bible. Yet God continued to withhold all human

testimony from me, till, through oft repeated manifestations of himself in the persons of the Godhead, and by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, he gradually strengthened my faith to believe simply in his testimony of himself, and to rely firmly on "Thus saith the Lord." And when this had been accomplished, and my faith was established, then the human testimony which I had so industriously sought, and so prayerfully desired, for years, was given to me; but it came only as *corroborative evidence*: first, in the encouragement I received from *two living Christians*, who related to me similar exercises which they had passed through; and then, in the perusal of several books which were placed in my hands. The first book, besides the Bible, which seemed in any degree to meet my case, as a witness to my own experience on this subject, was, "The Great Teacher," by Harris. In the deeply spiritual and exalted views of this author, I recognized my own thoughts. The next was the "Life of Lady Maxwell," whose experience on the subject

of peculiar manifestations of the Trinity, accorded so closely with my own, that I stood amazed, and blessed God that I had been permitted to read the book. Still I could not say, as Lady Maxwell did, that “the bitter root of sin was extracted from my heart.” And even now, that I can say, I dwell in love, and that sin has ceased to sting my soul with that “fear which hath torment, because perfect love casteth out fear,” (1. John, iv., 18,) yet still I discover that “the root of sin” exists in my heart; and the reason that its fruits have no power to sting my soul, is only because the actings of *faith* are so vivid, vigorous and incessant in their application to the atoning blood of Christ, that the remedy is unceasingly applied to the disease: this prevents the accumulation of guilt unrepented of, and keeps the “conscience void of offence toward God and man”—thus it is that sin is deprived of its sting, and repentance of its bitterness. This I apprehend to have been the state in which Lady Maxwell lived, when she said

that the bitter root of sin was extracted from her heart : for we find her, even then, mourning over her short-comings, and want of conformity to Christ, not as though she were already perfect, but following after perfection, or perfect conformity to Christ, as St. Paul urges upon the Philippians, iii. chap., 12-15. It is true that the soul who lives thus is not the servant of sin, nor does that soul obey the carnal mind ; on the contrary, it is “dying daily more and more unto sin, and living more and more unto righteousness ;” yet, so long as there are any remains of the spirit of legality lingering in the soul, *sin will sting* with the “fear that hath torment.” But when the spirit of legality is completely driven from the heart, and the soul is ushered into “the glorious liberty of the children of God,” (Rom. viii., 21,) then it not only apprehends the doctrine of its total depravity by nature, but has proportionably clear and correct views of the atonement for sin, by the sufferings and death of Christ. Then, and not till then, the soul ceases to look within

itself for any thing to recommend it to the favour of God, and casts itself unreservedly upon the mercy of God in Christ. And thus having learned to *look away from self*, to the righteousness of Christ, for acceptance with God, this soul finds itself in perfect peace with God : it “dwelleth in love,” *hates sin because God hates it*, and fears not so much the punishment of its transgressions and delinquencies, as it loves the hand of the Father, who inflicts the wise correction.

Yes, I love my Father, God, too well to wish to escape the discipline which he sees needful to inflict ; and I dread sin as my most subtle and dangerous foe, while, at the same time, I can exclaim in the triumph of faith : “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect ? It is God that justifieth : who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died ; yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution,

or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.” Rom. viii., 33–39.

But to return to the testimony: The third work which I met with, as a powerful witness to the genuine nature of my own remarkable experience, was, “Owen on Communion with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, each person distinctly, in Love, Grace and Consolation.” And in studying this work, I was astonished and delighted to find myself experimentally and practically familiar with the thoughts and views of this old standard theologian, having been already instructed by the Holy Spirit in the knowledge of these “deep things of God.”

Thus I received, first, the testimony of those living in my own day, and then the testimony of two witnesses who lived a century before me, proving that I was not *quite alone* in these experiences, and that it was *no new thing* which had happened to me, as some affirmed. In this I felt that God had answered my prayer in full for human testimony, though the answer was delayed by infinite Wisdom, till his own Spirit had strengthened my faith to believe, without the intervention of the human means I had so earnestly desired. And now I bless God that he permitted my faith to be so severely tried for a season: for, having had to meet the cavils of man, and the more wily suggestions of the powers of darkness, and being taught and strengthened by God to “stand against the wiles of the devil,” and to disprove the charge of imagining these things, I both know and feel that my faith is a thousand times stronger, and my understanding more enlightened, in consequence of those very conflicts, than they would have

been if I had been spared the severe discipline. Therefore I feel the more confidence in bearing my testimony to these things, strange as they may appear to some.

CHAPTER IV.

To those who suggest that these remarkable manifestations and views of faith are the work of imagination, I would address a few remarks respecting the powers of the human mind, in their acts and operations. Mental philosophers assert that the soul has various powers : some of which are simple, and act independently of the rest, while others are compound faculties, and cannot act without presupposing the operation of others ; some appear to be involuntary, while others are evidently voluntary in their operations.

Thus the power of *perception* is a single and involuntary operation of the mind. Conception is also a single and involuntary operation. But fancy is a certain turn of thought, which has the power of summoning up any particular class of ideas, and must be under

the influence of judgment and taste : therefore, it is not a simple but a compound faculty ; or it is that which is composed of many simple ideas. And imagination is a *voluntary* operation and a *compound* faculty, which presupposes abstraction, and is dependent on the fancy.

Perception believes in the present existence of its object, whether that object be visible or invisible, material or immaterial, an object of sense or of thought ; and it leads us to form certain ideas or notions, such as of sound, of motion, number, causation, effect, duration, power, force, energy, personal identity, etc.

Conception is the power that gives us definite ideas of our sensations, and of the objects of our perceptions—it is the power that gives us an exact transcript of what we have felt or perceived.

Memory is the power which enables us to discover the likeness between our *past perceptions* and *present conceptions*. And then, by the power of habit, we form those con-

ceptions into associations of ideas. These associations of ideas the fancy collects into classes, and thus furnishes materials for the imagination to work upon. But the imagination is the power that modifies our conceptions, and combining the different parts of various classes together, forms new wholes of our own creation. The imagination believes, though the belief is often but momentary, and at other times scarcely definable to ourselves, yet it believes in the present existence of its object; but as soon as the imagination is over, the belief in the existence of its object is at an end.

Thus, by an analysis of my mental operations, on the acknowledged principles of the science of mental philosophy, I perceive that we may form conceptions of what we have felt or perceived; and fancy may collect those conceptions into certain classes or associations of ideas, according to the dictates of judgment and taste; and this being done, and the power of abstraction in exercise, the imagination may combine different parts of

those classes of ideas, and form a new whole of our own creation. But imagination can never create out of nothing: *it must work upon the conceptions of former perceptions and sensations.*

And now, because the imagination can only act upon the conceptions of former perceptions and sensations, I ask how it is possible to imagine what we have never had any previous perception or sensation of? Or how can it be the work of imagination to conceive of things which have no existence in the *material* universe, and, existing only in God the Creator, is above the reach of created intelligence, excepting as it is revealed through the influences of God's Spirit? And I also ask, If the imagination is a voluntary faculty, and presupposes the habit of associations of ideas formed by the fancy, under the influence of judgment and taste, how can those impressions and perceptions be the work of imagination, which come into the mind *unexpectedly, without any visible cause*, and absorbing every faculty, holds them in

awe and reverence, filling the whole soul with amazement, and with indescribably happy emotions, to which it had hitherto been a stranger? I ask again, Whence comes that Light which suddenly illumines the soul and acquaints it with its own condition, before unnoticed and unfelt, solves to its satisfaction the greatest apparent paradoxes, and gives new views of truth? Do men solve intricate problems in this style; or by close study and laborious application of the mind? “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” John iii., 6, 8.

How comes it that the affections—love, joy, hope, desire, fear, hatred, grief, anger, etc.—which are naturally fixed supremely on earthly things, are turned out of their natural channel, and fixed on things invisible to sense—God and a glorious eternity? You

may answer, It is because the individual is under a strong influence to believe in these things. True; but whence comes this influence to *believe* in the existence of these things, and to *love things contrary to fallen human nature*? Here is the secret: This influence comes from the Spirit of God; and the influences of God's Spirit, when he is pleased to act, are more powerful than the combined influence of men, sin, and devils in hell: they are omnipotent in their effects.

Convinced, then, that the Spirit of God has access to the soul by a way that we cannot explain, and that his influences are all-powerful, what are the effects produced in the soul by his presence, and how may we distinguish these effects from those produced by natural causes?

When we look out upon a new and beautiful landscape in nature, we have involuntary perceptions of a number of beautiful objects; these we have received through the external organ of sense, and they furnish materials for the internal operation called

reflection, from which other new ideas arise ; and during this process we are conscious that both the perceptions and the ideas or notions they give rise to, are new to our minds. Afterwards, when we are removed from the view of that landscape, we can form in our mind conceptions of the various perceptions which we had on first beholding those objects ; and memory enables us to decide whether those perceptions and our present conceptions of them are alike. So when we again come within view of the same landscape, we have the same perceptions, but they are no longer new : memory recognizes the same objects, and our perceptions are only a repetition of those we had before ; yet they are as truly perceptions as they were at first.

But when the power of abstraction is in exercise, and conceptions of former perceptions arise in the mind, and we become so absorbed by those conceptions as to forget, for the time, surrounding material objects, in the contemplation of our internal concep-

tions, here imagination is working, and then, if we choose and *will to do it*, we may begin and continue to form one new scene in our minds after another, all of our own creation ; but here the ideas and conceptions are not new of themselves : it is only a new modification, arrangement or combination of old ideas and past conceptions into new forms, according to the dictates of fancy and taste.

Now this same process holds true, as regards spiritual perceptions : only, in the former case, the perceptions *enter* the mind through and by the aid of the bodily senses ; while, in the latter case, the perception is received through the eye of the mind, independently of the organs of sense. In the former case, the soul looked out of itself, through its material eyes, upon external objects of sense ; but in the latter case, it has spiritual perceptions through faith, which is the spiritual eye of the soul. And when spiritual light enters the soul, spiritual things are brought before the mind for its consideration : it may be an *entirely new perception*

of spiritual truth, as in the analogous case of the perception of outward objects ; but observe, it is an entirely different thing from the work of imagination.

And with reference to the influences of the Holy Spirit, which is, in fact, the light of God's Spirit shining into the soul, there are *three* things involved in the definition of spiritual perception, which exist together in the soul : first, the presence of God ; secondly, a *change of sensation* in the mind, which is the effect of God's presence ; thirdly, the reference of that sensation in the soul to the presence of God, as its cause. This the Spirit of God makes the soul understand ; but *how* the influences of the Spirit enter, and *how* he makes the soul conscious of his presence, 'is a mystery involved in "the deep things of God," and which he has not revealed to us : therefore it is beyond the boundary of the human intellect, while in its present infantile state.

When we first become conscious that the light of God's Spirit is shining into our mind,

we have new involuntary spiritual perceptions of those spiritual truths and objects, (whatever it may be,) which the Spirit of God places before the mind for its consideration. Here the Spirit of God is the original suggesting cause: the ideas or imagery thus suggested the soul immediately perceives, and the perceptions thus received are impressed upon the mind by the Spirit, as the wax receives the impression of the seal. And just according to the degree of power the Spirit uses in sealing those impressions, is the strength of the spiritual perception of the soul. Now, having received through the light and power of the Spirit, certain spiritual perceptions, the mind is led to contemplate those spiritual perceptions, and hence arise new spiritual ideas or notions of the character and attributes of Deity, and of their bearing on the soul. Then follows the process of reflection, which is an act of the understanding, under the guidance and teaching of the Divine mind, as St. Paul says, "In demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." I. Cor., ii., 4, 5. "For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things which are freely given to us of God. Which things we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth, *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I. Cor., ii., 10-14. Thus, under the exhibition of divine truth, in the light of the Spirit, and under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, the soul learns the true character of God, and the relations that exist between him and the renewed soul, discovers the

powers of the human mind, as derived from Deity, and the accountability of that rational mind as a moral agent, learns what God requires from man, through faith in the divine precepts and promises, and in obedience to the divine commandments, and thus becomes an enlightened Christian. And shall we call all this the work of imagination? It would be the height of arrogance and presumption to do so. No, it is Mind acting upon mind: God teaching the rational Christian soul, through the mysterious yet blessed influences of his Holy Spirit!

It is true, then, that the soul of man, in this life, may have spiritual perceptions of spiritual objects, as vivid as those perceptions which the mind receives on looking through the organ of sight at a beautiful landscape in nature. God himself may be the object of those spiritual perceptions, or it may be of the attributes and perfections of Jehovah; or, again, it may be of the presence and influence of good angels and evil spirits, for God's word as-

sure us that we come into contact with evil spirits more frequently than we are aware of or like to allow, and that separate spirits have a permissible power of influencing the operations of mind—have the power of conveying into the mind certain mysterious influences, which call our mental powers into operation—we cannot doubt. See II. Chron., xviii., 19-22 ; Dan. x., 13 ; Matt. iv., 1-11, etc.

Do you ask, Since there are independent mental operations, arising from the consciousness of possessing certain intellectual powers, and other operations of the mind arising from the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit—and yet again, other mental operations, arising from the influence of separate spirits, both good and evil—is it not probable that you have mistaken one for the other ? And considering that the apostle says, “Satan is transformed into an angel of light,” (II. Cor., xi., 14,) may you not have attributed to the influence of the Holy Spirit those mental operations which are only the

effects of your own reflections upon external observations and internal consciousness? I answer, God has given us an infallible rule of judging, in all such cases: "Ye shall know them by their fruits: Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Matt. vii., 16. That is, Do we receive nourishment from what is useless or pernicious? Will thorns nourish and cheer the heart, like the fruit of the vine? or are thistles sweet and nourishing like figs? "Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them." Matt. vii., 17-20. Now, therefore, by the fruits of holiness which these manifestations have produced in my heart and life. I know them to be genuine, for they have exercised a sanctifying influence in my soul.

But, say you, in other ages of the world, such manifestations were given to chosen

witnesses; but now, that Revelation is closed, we are not to expect such things. I answer, "God is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." And though Revelation is closed, as it concerns the Church collectively, yet God has promised expressly to be with Christians, to the end of the world: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matt. xxviii., 20. But in what way, or in what sense, can he be with the souls of individual Christians, every where and in all ages, if it is not in a spiritual sense? And did not Christ promise to send the Spirit, saying, "He will guide you into all truth, and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." John xvi. Jesus promised to send the Spirit, and he came on the day of Pentecost, in the descent of the Holy Ghost, as cloven tongues of fire, and then *commenced* teaching the apostles and other disciples. See Acts, ii. chap. But we also live under the dispensation or "ministration of the Spirit," (II. Cor., iii., 8,) and

we, too, are to expect, not prophetic revelations, but those influences of the Spirit which explain and illustrate revelation already given, and build up the believer in faith and hope : those revelations of truth which enlighten the understanding in the knowledge of the Scriptures, discover to us the economy of God's grace in the work of man's redemption, teaching us to *know ourselves*, purifying the heart, and sanctifying the powers of the mind, so that, body, soul and spirit, we may be the Lord's. And this I affirm to be the nature, sum and substance of those manifestations given to me by the Holy Spirit, which I have attempted to describe in these pages. They are not the work of imagination, and *could not be*, because it was a work entirely above all created intelligence—above all the powers of human intellect—for such views and thoughts hath not entered into the mind of man : to conceive of them would be impossible, except as they are taught by the Spirit of God!

It was not the Essence of Deity (as I have

said before) which my spirit received a perception of; but it was the manifestation of the persons of the Godhead, and of the characteristics and attributes of the Divine Mind, or the perfections of Jehovah, that were made spiritually manifest to my soul. And it was in consequence of the long-continued and frequent repetition of the manifestations, always producing the same effects in my soul, that my mind acquired an astonishing quickness in discovering and comprehending the cause, which invariably produced the same effects, which cause, I am *intuitively taught*, is a perception of the presence of God. Consequently, if at any instant, or under any circumstances, a ray of light from God's Spirit is brought to bear upon my soul, that instant my soul, with the rapidity of lightning, leaps towards a recognition of the cause, and finds it in communion with the Holy Spirit.

When those manifestations of spiritual objects are presented to the eye of faith, I have spiritual *perceptions* of them, and *sensations*

which are peculiarly the effect of such manifestations. When these manifestations are withdrawn, I have vivid conceptions of what those perceptions and sensations were. And I can, by the aid of memory, picture over to myself the whole spiritual scenery, if I may so express myself. Yet there is no mistake in my mind as to its operations: I know *that* to have been the manifestation itself; and *this* to be only the work of memory, recalling the scene over again—and then I contemplate the conceptions which I have of *former perceptions and sensations*. But if, in the midst of this contemplation, the manifestation itself is renewed, my soul instantly recognizes the presence of God, and contemplation is mingled with adoring worship.

Thus, even in spirituals, I have been taught to distinguish between the mental powers of perception, conception, abstraction, fancy, imagination, etc., and to study the developments of their various operations. And in saying this, I do not undervalue the power of imagination; on the contrary, I regard it as

one of the highest gifts which God has bestowed upon the human soul, provided it be under the controlling and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. Imagination, while under the control of the carnal heart, or depraved fallen human nature, is perhaps one of the most dangerous powers that the mind possesses: it leads the soul far away from God, and opens an inlet to the heart or affections which has plunged many a soul into perdition. What says the Bible of the sinners of the old world? "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen. vi., 5. And again, Paul says: "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Because *that which may be known of God is manifest in them*, for God hath showed it unto them. For the *invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even the*

eternal power and Godhead ; so that they are without excuse, because that when they knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." Rom. i., 18-21. Paul wrote this of the Gentile world, who, not having revelation, would be judged by *the light of nature* ; and Henry remarks upon it thus : "Observe what they knew—*the invisible things of him, even his eternal power and Godhead*. The power and Godhead of God are invisible things, and yet are *clearly seen* in their products. They could not come, by natural light, to the knowledge of the three persons in the Godhead, (though some fancy they have found footsteps of that in Plato's writings,) but they did come to the knowledge of the Godhead, at least so much knowledge as was sufficient to have kept them from idolatry. This was that truth which they held in unrighteousness, and this from the creation of the world. They became *vain in their imaginations, in their reasonings*, and practical

inferences. The several opinions and hypotheses of the various sects of philosophers, concerning these things, were but so many *vain imaginations*. When truth is forsaken, errors multiply infinitely. And their foolish heart was darkened. The foolishness and practical wickedness of the heart cloud and darken the intellectual powers and faculties. Nothing tends more to the binding and perverting of the understanding, than the corruption and depravedness of the will and affections."

Paul also exhorts the Corinthians to "Cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." II. Cor. x., 5. When the imagination is brought into "the obedience of Christ," it is under the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit—its images and pictures are holy—this tends to elevate the affections, and to rivet them on heavenly things. A sanctified imagination learns to trace analogies between things which are

visible, and things that are invisible and eternal. It sees much of God in every thing, and learns to commune with him through the book of nature, as well as in the volume of providence. I believe that the material world shadows forth the spiritual world, and that temporal things shadow forth spiritual things; but it requires the light of the Spirit, shining through the written word, to discover this fact clearly to our minds. And when a Christian's intellect becomes a pupil in the school of the Holy Spirit—that is, when a child of God *dedicates his intellect* to the service of God, and with childlike simplicity waits upon the Spirit for instruction—he finds more information conveyed into his mind by one ray of teaching light from God's Spirit, than he could acquire by a whole year's laborious study, without the Spirit's aid. Under this heavenly culture, nature becomes like Jacob's ladder, so many glorious steps of communication with heaven, or so many steps by which we may hold communication with spiritual realities. If

we look at the glory of the rising sun, the soul casts a look upwards, and prays, "Sun of righteousness, arise upon me with healing in thy wings!" The calm, peaceful and glorious descent of the setting sun will remind the Christian of the good man's peaceful end. If the refreshing breezes fan the cheek of the fevered invalid, he will cry in spirit, Breathe upon me, Spirit of Grace and Supplication! Every tree, flower and insect will teach something of the character of God, and draw forth adoring thoughts of love and wonder: and so on, through all the grand and sublime works of nature's God, we shall learn to roam with profit and delight, and to recognize our Father's hand and our Creator's glory in them all. Do you call this "the poetry of religion?" Call it poetry or whatever else you please, but know that there is *a blessing in it*: yes, *a blessedness*, which I, for one, would not exchange for any, or all, the earthly joys you could offer me, apart from it. And thus it is that "the *invisible things* of him from the creation of the world,

are *clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.*" A sanctified intellect, then, and especially a sanctified imagination, becomes a powerful auxiliary in the soul, to prepare and educate it for heaven.

The soul tutored thus to "mount from nature up to nature's God," learns also to commune with God in *the volume of providence*—nature teaches the *theory*; providence develops it in *practice*. And a Christian may so walk with God as to see him and converse with him, in all the little events and occurrences of *every day life*. Yes, he may realize the presence of God, as of a friend at his right hand, all the day long. He may acquire the habit of consulting God at every step, and then he will learn to consider nothing too little and unimportant for God to observe, and he will delight to recognize his Father's eye fixed upon him all the while. Have you ever observed a little child amusing itself, while its nurse remained near by, to prevent its getting into mischief or hurting itself?

The miniature man or woman, either it may be, will be busy first with one plaything, then another ; it may build card-houses, or carry on fanciful dialogues with Mrs. A. or Mr. B., according as its play may be. Presently a new thought strikes its infant mind, or some sudden temptation comes in its way, and with “mother Eve’s curiosity,” or fallen nature’s perversity, the little one will start up to make the new experiment ; but *if it is a well-disciplined child*, it will pause a while and look at nurse, to see if she approves, before it goes too far. And then a nod of approval, or a look of reproof, will instantly decide its course of action. Now, just so tenderly and vigilantly does our heavenly Father watch and guard his dutiful and well-disciplined children : he guides them with his eye, his love, because their eyes are ever towards him ; nay, he guards them “as the apple of the eye, and hides them under the shadow of his wings.” Ps. xvii., 8. When David said, “Thou art my hiding-place ; thou shalt preserve me from trouble ; thou shalt compass

me about with songs of deliverance," God replied, "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go : I will guide thee with mine eye." Ps. xxxii., 7, 8.

Now, when a Christian has learned thus to recognize the eye of his heavenly Father's love ever upon him, he also hears his voice of instruction in every providence, and acknowledges his hand in every event, from the mighty revolution which convulses states and kingdoms, and shakes empires into atoms, down to the *little home affair*, which seemingly is too trivial to repeat to a neighbour. Yet God is in all the First Cause, and through all teaches man knowledge. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." Matt. x., 29-31. Yes, the doctrine of a *special providence* is a doctrine of the Bible.

But, say some, how are you *sure* that the

Bible itself is true? a revelation of God's word and will?

I answer, first, the signal fulfilment of numberless prophecies, uttered hundreds and thousands of years before their accomplishment, which accomplishment profane history, and even infidel historians, have recorded, sometimes with a sneer at the prophecy, while they recorded the fact of its fulfilment just as Holy Writ predicted: as well as those prophecies now being accomplished in my day, respecting the Jews, heathen nations, and the Church of Christ—these are in themselves *external evidence* enough for my mind, of the genuine inspiration of the Scriptures, even from Genesis to Revelation.

Secondly, the fact that there is scarcely a page in the Bible to which my own heart does not respond in its experience, either joyful or painful, is *internal proof* sufficient, and convinces me that the whole Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is the inspired word of God, who declares, “I am he which searcheth the veins and hearts, and I will

give unto every one of you according to your works." Rev. ii., 23. It was Jesus Christ, the ascended and glorified Saviour, who said this; and David, the Psalmist, many ages before, addressed Solomon thus: "And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandest all the imaginations of the thoughts. If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him he will cast thee off for ever." I. Chron. xxviii., 9.

"But vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass' colt," said Job. xi., 12. "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established." Is. vii., 9.

